

RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL STAFF

MANAGING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

Why is this information important?

There are children with complex emotional needs in schools. At times we may need to physically support them to keep them and/or others safe, as a last resort.

Any use of physical intervention must be within the framework provided by the law and by Government and County guidance.

Although it can be necessary to use a physical intervention, our aim, and that of the overseeing official bodies, is to reduce its use.

The media can give misleading impressions about the use of RPI in schools and teachers' rights.

Challenging Situations

- Wherever possible have a plan; if it has happened once then consider the safest options if it happens again and share this
- Risk assess - it may be that removing others and/or objects is the safer option
- Think about the environment
- It is stressful and not easy to think straight in a quickly changing, challenging situation

Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention

Children and young people with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum conditions and mental health difficulties in health and social care services and special education settings

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- Focuses on a positive and proactive approach, Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), to support children and young people and avoid the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI)
- Understanding behaviour as communication is key to planning appropriate support
- Gives information in recording and reporting, de-briefing and review
- Describes different form of restraint, including withdrawal and seclusion

SCC GUIDANCE

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Guidance
Core | Consider | Complex

Guidance

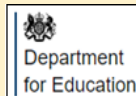
Reducing Restrictive
Physical Intervention in
Schools and Children's
Services

The expectation is that as far as possible schools and young people's settings and services will be restraint free.

*This guidance must be read in conjunction with the Reducing Restrictive Physical Intervention Management Arrangements.

SCC STEPPED APPROACH

Step Back	Don't rush into an intervention, is it necessary, do you have suitable justification.
Assess Threat	Assess the individual, the objects, the environment and the situational factors.
Find Help	Can you reduce the risks by getting help from other trained colleagues or by using the physical environment, space, natural barriers etc.
Evaluate Options	Primary – proactive actions to remove the triggers Secondary – interpersonal skills, non-verbal body language e.g. open palms, directing, defusing, calming, switching staff etc. Tertiary – Enhanced observation, time out, restrictive physical intervention.
Respond	Apply the principle of the least restrictive strategy in responding. Continue to re-evaluate the situation and your response. Continually monitor for changes in level of risk.



WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

DfE advice talks about 'force' 'control' 'restraint'

Staffordshire policy mainly refers to 'restrictive physical intervention' (RPI)

This means any form of restrictive intervention... (intentionally or unintentionally) to limit or restrict another's liberty (BILD CoP 2006)

As well as 'active' physical contact, the legislation on the use of force covers 'passive' interventions such as:

- Standing in a doorway to stop someone getting through
- Shutting someone in a room
- Strapping someone into a wheelchair or buggy



All use of touch and physical support must:

- Be non-abusive, with no intention to cause pain or injury
- Be in the best interests of the child and others
- Have a clear educational purpose (e.g. to access the curriculum or to improve social relationships)
- Take account of gender and other personal issues

OFSTED GUIDANCE 2021



Key Points within the guidance:

- Includes a summary of the law or guidance on the area of physical intervention and restriction of liberty
- Recognises the impact of RPI on children's mental health and possible damage it can cause to relationships between children and young people and those who care for them
- All behaviour is a form of communication

When we are considering whether a setting complies with its legal requirements, we ask:

- Was this action legal and necessary – for example, was it taken to prevent a child from injuring themselves or someone else or causing serious harm to property or in a school, to maintain good order and discipline?
- Could this action be considered 'reasonable' in this particular circumstance?
- Was it the minimum force necessary?
- Was it proportionate?

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS



EDUCATION AND INSPECTIONS

ACT 2006

Enables school staff to use **such force as is reasonable in the circumstances** for the purposes of preventing a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- **committing any offence** (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil)
- **causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person** (*including the pupil him/herself*)
- **prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline** at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

What is Reasonable Force?

A degree of force which:

- is in proportion to the circumstances and seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent
- is the minimum needed for the least amount of time to make a situation safe
- is not intended to cause pain or injury

Based on thoughtful, informed professional judgement

Follows principles of good practice

DUTY OF CARE

'A duty of care exists when duties and responsibilities are imposed upon professional or paid carers'. (Ashton and Ward1992)



- In the best interests of the child
- Using informed professional judgement

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- Make sure that whatever you do does not seem at all threatening or aggressive
- Make sure that whatever you do is a proportionate response
- Be aware that moving pupils from A to B increases risk of injury (to everyone involved)
- Consider your own safety – you are not required to put yourself at risk (avoid lifting pupils from the floor; think carefully about intervening on your own, in a fight, or with bigger pupils)

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

- Use a stable stance so that you do not overbalance
- If appropriate, use an assertive command (e.g. 'Fred, stop!') to try to avoid intervening physically
- If appropriate, explain calmly to the young person what is happening during a physical intervention
- Hold long bones (avoid joints)
- Monitor the pupil's physical condition (breathing, colour, movement etc.)
- Do not hold pupils on the floor

GOOD PRACTICE

FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT

- Inform a senior member of staff
- Inform parents/carers of any use of RPI, transparency is important
- Record what happened
- Follow up to ensure that staff and pupils affected by an incident have continuing support for as long as necessary in respect of:
 - Physical consequences
 - Emotional stress or loss of confidence
 - Opportunities to analyse, reflect and learn

SUPPORTING EACH OTHER THROUGH POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- Agree and follow school policy
- Support each other during an incident
- Have a system for debriefing; talk to someone about it before going home
- Reflect and review; how can we prevent this happening again? What might you do differently next time?
- Plan collaboratively