

# Physical Intervention Guidance

Academic Year 2022-2025



## **Aims and scope**

Every school is required to have a behaviour policy and to make this policy known to staff, parents and pupils. The Connect Education Trust requires that the behaviour policy includes the power to use physical intervention/ reasonable force and indicates the circumstances in which intervention might be used. The Connect Education Trust acknowledges its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs (SEND). Further information can be sought in the DfE advice for schools 'Use of reasonable force' guidance.

Connect Education Trust is committed to creating a community which is based on the values of respect, safety and trust.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy which sets out the Connect Education Trust's many strategies for encouraging positive behaviour and escalating sanctions for poor behaviour. Physical intervention is used very rarely and only as a last resort when all other preventative methods have proved ineffective.

A number of staff in each school have been trained in the 'Approach' technique of physical intervention. However, all members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force as do people whom the Headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit. Schools do not require parental consent.

## **Purpose of physical intervention**

Physical intervention is used to ensure all adults and pupils are safe when they are in school.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where physical intervention may be used:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground;
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Physical interventions should not be used:

- As a punishment, it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.
- To search for items banned under the school rules. Schools may search pupils without consent on reasonable suspicion of prohibited items such knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images and any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Even as a last resort, the following criteria must be met:

- There must be good grounds to believe that immediate physical intervention is required
- It must involve reasonable force for a reasonable amount of time
- As far as is reasonable pupils will be forewarned that physical intervention may be used.

Where physical intervention is used the member of staff will tell the child that they will give back control as soon as they are able to make safe choices.

#### **When physical intervention has been used:**

Staff involved will:

- Inform the Headteacher, or the person in charge of the school in the Headteacher's absence, immediately after a physical intervention has taken place
- Log the incident on the 'Record of Physical Intervention' form

The Headteacher will:

- Inform the parents as soon as practically possible
- In the event of an injury, ensure first aid is administered and medical attention arranged. If the person is a pupil, parents will be contacted and asked to make their way to hospital if their child has been taken there.
- Ensure any incident which involves an injury has a prompt completion of record in the welfare room accident book and completion of the electronic AF1 report which should be sent to the Local Education Authority Health and Safety Officer.

#### **Pastoral Care**

When a serious incident involving physical intervention has occurred, the school is committed to using restorative techniques (Relate, Reflect, Resolve, Repair) in order to repair any damage which may occur to relationships. This aim is to prevent further incidents.

#### **Grievances**

Should a dispute/grievance occur due to physical intervention then schools should refer to the Complaints Policy. The CEO must be informed.

#### **Monitoring**

The number and nature of Serious Incident Sheets will inform risk assessments and individual behaviour management planning and reported to the Local Governing Body (LGB).

#### **Safe Spaces (when required)**

Safe spaces allow children to "act out" and "work through" experiences which are overwhelming. Adults within a school environment can support pupils to work through by allowing the use of a safe space. Children need to learn in the context of relationship - they cannot just be told. Chill out spaces may be used in a similar manner to help children self-regulate.

Children are encouraged to use the chill out space independently and could choose to go with or without an adult. The child may sit quietly or shout, kick and punch the equipment provided for a release. Sometimes if there is persistent, challenging behaviour we may need to physically manage a child away from a situation and the space is used as a safe place for the child to calm down. Our aim is to ensure an adult stays with a child during this period.

However, there are times when a child may need to be on their own in the safe space, and the safe space door needs to be held shut. This only happens when a child is causing significant risk of harm to the adult looking after them. At all times a staff member will wait outside the safe space until it is safe enough to open the door. Sometimes a swap of staff enables the child to calm quickly.

An incident form needs to be filled in if a child is in the safe space for an extended period, and parents informed.