



Running Deer Intervention Services

De-escalation, Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy

Reviewed: 12.07.2026 | Next date for review: 01.07.2027

Purpose of the policy

The Department for Education recognises that as an Intervention Service we have a duty to care for all children and young people and that staff should take appropriate actions to ensure that the children and young people in our care are protected from harm and do not harm others. This policy deals with all situations where physical intervention or restraint may need to be used. This includes situations where children and young people have risks assessed and protocols in place but also for any child or young person whose behaviour may present a risk.

This policy will make staff aware of the type of situations where they may or may not be required to intervene physically, and those situations where it is acceptable or not acceptable to physically restrain a child or young person. While every effort will be made to prevent situations from escalating, we recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances where physical intervention, including physical restraint, is necessary to maintain safety and prevent harm. All staff are expected to adhere to this policy.

Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 93 – Power to Use Reasonable Force)
- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Restrictive Interventions, including the Use of Reasonable Force in Schools (Department for Education, current guidance)
- Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance (Department for Education)
- Non-school Alternative Provision: Voluntary National Standards

Terminology

Physical intervention is any reasonable and proportionate physical contact used to prevent harm or serious disruption. Physical restraint is a form of restrictive intervention in which reasonable force is used to prevent a child or young person from causing injury to themselves

or others, committing a criminal offence, seriously damaging property or seriously disrupting good order. Any intervention must always be necessary, reasonable, proportionate and for the shortest time possible.

Rationale

Every child and young person has a right to the best education which can be provided, in partnership with the Intervention Service, their family, schools, the local authority and the community. Running Deer Intervention Service aims to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our children and young people to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential. Positive relationships, emotionally attuned practice and skilled responses to behaviour are fundamental to creating a safe, supportive and effective learning environment. This policy should be read in conjunction with the behaviour and safeguarding policies.

We take a holistic approach to the support of children and young people and their provision should be individualised in accordance with their needs.

Staff will be trained in relational approaches, de-escalation, and physical intervention via the Team Teach Level 2 training. They will understand that planning a wellmatched, engaging, curriculum and employing the direct teaching of social and emotional skill development is imperative to minimising behaviour that presents a risk. We use the PACE approach (see our Relationship Policy and Behaviour Policy) alongside our Emotional Curriculum and individually targeted PSHE lessons.

There can sometimes be occasions when behaviour may challenge the ability of staff to maintain a safe learning environment. Behaviour may disturb others, risk damaging property or place that child or young person or others at risk of harm. All staff need to know the appropriate steps and strategies to deescalate situations, including the use of distraction, diffusion, re-direction, humour and positive engagement. Priority is to minimise the severity of behaviour and avoid physical intervention or restraint becoming necessary. Confident trained staff working within an effective team climate will feel they can handle day to day situation effectively knowing they can call on the support of colleagues.

Staff are expected to respond to behaviour that presents a risk using the least restrictive approach appropriate to the circumstances. Responses should normally follow the following hierarchy:

- Prevention through positive relationships and engaging learning
- Early identification of signs of distress
- Verbal de-escalation
- Diversion and distraction
- Offering choices and reducing demands
- Environmental adjustments
- Withdrawal from the situation where appropriate
- Physical intervention
- Physical restraint only where there is an immediate risk of harm

Staff will only use reasonable force where the risks associated with not intervening are greater than those associated with the intervention itself. Any intervention must be necessary,

proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances, using the least restrictive approach for the shortest possible time. Wherever practicable, only trained staff should undertake restrictive interventions using approved Team Teach techniques. In unforeseen emergencies, untrained staff may intervene where immediate action is necessary to prevent serious harm.

We aim to:

- Minimise the number of physical interventions in Intervention Service
- Ensure that physical interventions are used as a last resort
- Develop an understanding about why we use physical interventions
- Have available physical intervention trained members of staff to support the management of physical interventions.

We will:

- Act within the legal framework and DfE guidance on the use of reasonable force
- Record and analyse physical interventions at least half termly
- Monitor serious incidents as soon as they occur
- Keep a separate record of physical interventions
- Review and update behaviour risk assessments and plans regularly in response to observations of children and young people to ensure that they remain appropriate
- Make accredited de-escalation and physical intervention training available for staff within the Intervention Service

DfE guidelines identify that a physical intervention can be used as a last resort in circumstances where:

- Maintaining a safe learning environment is at risk
- The child or young person, or other children are at immediate risk
- There is a risk to Intervention Service property.

Staff should follow the most recent Department for Education guidance on Restrictive Interventions, including the Use of Reasonable Force in Schools, alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education and current Alternative Provision guidance. These documents should be read in conjunction with this policy and reviewed whenever updated by the Department for Education.

Principles

Running Deer Intervention Services is committed to reducing the need for restrictive interventions by promoting:

- relational behaviour support
- trauma-informed practice
- restorative approaches
- emotionally available adults
- proactive interaction planning
- individualised support
- least restrictive practice

Staff will always seek to understand the function of behaviour and respond in a manner that preserves the dignity, wellbeing and rights of each child and young person. Physical

intervention will only ever be considered when all reasonable alternatives have been attempted or where immediate action is required to prevent harm.

Recording and reporting

Where young people are known to display behaviours which may present a risk, they will have a behaviour risk assessment. All staff should be aware of this assessment and familiarise themselves with it. These profiles should be read alongside any individual learning plans which identify children's individual barriers and potential triggers.

In situations where a behaviour has been concerning or where physical intervention has been necessary an incident should be recorded using CPOMs. These reports will be used as a basis for a debrief conversation as soon as possible after the incident.

Incident records should include:

- antecedents and known triggers
- de-escalation strategies attempted
- reason physical intervention became necessary
- type of intervention used
- duration of the intervention
- staff involved
- injuries sustained, if any
- the young person's views following the incident
- contact with parents/carers
- actions taken to reduce the likelihood of recurrence
- any amendments made to relational support or risk assessments

Post incident support should take place as soon as reasonably possible after an incident, this should include restorative conversations with the child or young person, reparative work for any hurt feelings, damage to property or injury to others. Staff members will be given a debrief which will take the form of a conversation with senior staff this will identify the need for any further support.

Wherever possible, young people will be supported to reflect on the incident and express their views. Their account will be recorded and considered when reviewing relational support plans, risk assessments and future preventative strategies.

Parents and carers will always be informed following a physical intervention as soon as is practicable and **at least within the same day**, and will be sent a copy of the CPOMS report within the same timeframe. The response from parents and carers will then will be included on CPOMS.

Where young people attend Running Deer through commissioned alternative provision, significant incidents involving restrictive intervention will also be communicated to the referring school or commissioning body, in accordance with safeguarding duties, information-sharing protocols and commissioning arrangements. Following any serious or repeated incident, relational support plans and individual risk assessments will be reviewed collaboratively with parents/carers, the referring school and other relevant professionals where appropriate.

If a member of staff or young person has sustained an injury an accident or injury form should be completed.

Senior Leaders will review every restrictive intervention to identify patterns, effectiveness of de-escalation strategies and opportunities to reduce future interventions. Monitoring will include frequency, duration, location, pupils involved, injuries, protected characteristics where appropriate and lessons learned. Trends will be reported termly to Directors to support governance and continual improvement.

Health and safety

These guidelines are written to ensure the health and safety both for the child or young person and staff members. We will:

- Ensure safe working practices
- Carry out risk assessments and take appropriate action to eliminate or reduce risks

All employees are expected to:

- consider their own physical health, emotional state, and attire

All staff will have access to 1:1 supervision on a half termly basis.

Staff who may be required to undertake restrictive interventions will receive accredited Team Teach training and regular refresher training. New staff will receive induction on relational support and de-escalation procedures before working independently with children and young people. Training records will be maintained and monitored to ensure competency remains current.

Equal Opportunities

Running Deer recognises that behaviour is often a form of communication and may arise from special educational needs, disability, trauma, adverse childhood experiences or mental health needs. Staff will make reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and will take account of each young person's individual needs before considering restrictive intervention. Every effort will be made to ensure that interventions preserve dignity, minimise distress and avoid discrimination.

Complaints and allegations

Children and young people have the right where possible and can question or complain about physical intervention.

We will ensure that children, young people and parents understand they can voice their opinions ask questions and voice any concerns.

If an allegation is made that a member of staff has used unnecessary force or that a member of staff has acted inappropriately this will be taken seriously. Allegations against staff will be managed under the Complaints policy.

The use of force as a punishment is always unlawful and inappropriate.

Contact Running Deer Intervention Services

Running Deer Intervention Services, Waterside, Berry Pomeroy, TQ9 6LH

Email: ifs@rdcic.org.uk

Website: <https://www.runningdeer.org.uk>