



Behaviour, Touch and Physical Intervention Policy

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Behaviour, Touch and Physical Intervention Policy

1. Introduction and purpose

Springfield School is a nurturing, inclusive community special school within The Gallery Trust. Our Behaviour, Touch and Physical Intervention Policy is designed to:

- Keep pupils, staff, visitors, and the wider community safe.
- Provide clear, consistent expectations for behaviour across the school.
- Empower staff with strategies that promote engagement, wellbeing, and meaningful learning.
- Ensure approaches are equitable, lawful, and aligned with statutory guidance and Trust protocols.

This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, and visiting professionals.

2. Values and core philosophy

At Springfield, everything begins with the child: their voice, their journey, and their potential. Our approach to behaviour is rooted in our school values:

- Belonging – Everyone is valued and part of our community.
- Possibility – Every child can thrive and achieve.
- Growth – We learn, reflect, and progress together.

We recognise that all behaviour is a form of communication. Behaviour offers insight into a pupil's needs, experiences, emotions, sensory profile, and sense of safety. Our practice is strengths-based, relational, and informed by a deep understanding of the needs of children with complex needs.

We commit to:

- Taking a holistic, empathetic approach.
- Responding with curiosity rather than judgement.
- Creating a safe and predictable environment.
- Supporting pupils to develop self-regulation, independence, communication and confidence.
- Ensuring all pupils are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness, in line with their rights and needs.

3. Creating the conditions for positive behaviour

3.1 Nurturing and Safe Environment



We provide:

- Warm, trusting adult relationships
- Predictable routines and boundaries
- Calm, low-arousal learning spaces
- Regulation opportunities throughout the day
- A total communication environment, honouring all forms of communication

3.2 Strengths-based, individualised practice

Staff maintain high expectations and adapt teaching and environments to:

- Support sensory regulation
- Reduce anxiety and challenge
- Celebrate effort, progress, and achievement
- Foster intrinsic motivation, independence and resilience

3.3 Role of staff

All staff:

- Regulate their own responses in order to co-regulate pupils
- Use calm, clear communication adapted to individual needs
- Prioritise connection and understanding before correction
- Support reflection and restoration once a pupil is ready

3.4 Reasonable adjustments

We comply with the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, ensuring adjustments to environment, curriculum and communication remove barriers to participation.

4. Understanding and responding to behaviour

4.1 Behaviour as communication

We recognise that dysregulation may arise from:

- Trauma or adverse experiences
- Sensory processing differences
- Neurodevelopmental conditions
- Emotional distress
- Changes, transitions or unmet needs

We remain professionally curious, seeking to understand what a child may be communicating and what support will help.



4.2 Collaborative approach

We work closely with:

- Pupils, using their preferred communication methods
- Parents/carers as key partners
- Therapists and external professionals to identify triggers, reduce risk, and co-create personalised strategies.

4.3 Supporting regulation

We provide:

- A preferred means of communication within a Total Communication environment
- Daily regulation routines on arrival to class
- Flexible movement and sensory breaks
- Visual supports
- Familiar and trusted adults
- Carefully planned transitions between classes and key stages

4.4 Graduated response to dysregulation

Staff use a graduated, least-restrictive approach when responding to dysregulation. The aim is always to reduce distress and restore regulation without the need for physical intervention wherever possible.

Responses may include:

1. Environmental adjustment
Adjusting the environment to reduce triggers, noise, sensory overload, or demand.
2. Co-regulation
Calm adult presence, reassurance, predictable language, and emotional support.
3. Distraction or redirection
Offering alternative activities, movement breaks, or sensory regulation opportunities.
4. Withdrawal to a safe or quieter space
Supporting the pupil to move to a calm area where they can regulate safely.
5. Planned supportive physical guidance
Gentle guidance or prompts used within an agreed plan where this supports safety or regulation.
6. Emergency physical intervention
Used only where there is an immediate risk of harm and all other strategies have been unsuccessful.

Physical intervention is always a last resort, used for the shortest possible time and in line with this policy and statutory guidance.



5. Touch and safe physical contact

Different forms of touch are often essential during the school day for care, communication, and emotional regulation. Staff use touch:

- With sensitivity and professional judgement
- With ongoing consent (verbal or non-verbal)

5.1 Examples of appropriate touch

- Instructional or guiding touch (*for example, hand under hand support to mark make or form letters.*)
- Proprioceptive/deep-pressure touch (if an agreed plan)
- Social/affirming touch (*e.g. handshake, high-five*)
- Soothing or reassurance touch (*e.g. hand on shoulder*)
- Contact through sensory engagement
- Touch required for medical or intimate care (*See Intimate Care Policy*)
- Therapeutic touch as part of an agreed plan (*guidance from relevant MDT*)

Touch should always be appropriate to the context, proportionate, and transparent to others

5.2 Inappropriate touch

These include:

- Unnecessary hand holding
- Any unwanted or non-consensual touch
- Touch for adult gratification
- Rough play, play-fighting or confusing physical interactions
- Punitive touch
- Secretive, harmful, or abusive contact
- Touch in intimate areas except where required for intimate care or medical need Staff remain mindful of cultural, personal and historical sensitivities and how these may impact on tolerance of personal space.

6. Physical intervention

6.1 Definition

Physical intervention refers to any action where staff use a degree of physical force to prevent harm, restrict movement, or guide a pupil to safety.

It includes:

- Direct physical contact
- Physical prompts or manual guidance



- Blocking or barriers preventing movement
- Use of equipment that restricts movement (e.g., leg splints to support mobility)

Routine supportive touch or physical prompts used as part of teaching, care, or communication are not considered physical intervention unless they restrict a pupil's freedom of movement.

It does **not** include normal, supportive physical contact.

6.2 Legal Framework

This policy follows:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006, Section 93
- Children Act 2004 – welfare of the child is paramount
- DfE Use of Reasonable Force (2013)
- Reducing the Need for Restraint (2019)

Force must always be:

- Reasonable, necessary and proportionate
- Used only when all other options have been exhausted
- Used to prevent imminent harm, serious disruption, or significant property damage
- The least restrictive option available
- Applied for the shortest possible time

Physical intervention will never be used as punishment.

7. When physical intervention may be required

Planned or emergency physical intervention may be used to:

- Prevent a pupil from injuring themselves or others
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Maintain immediate safety in a crisis
- Guide someone away from danger when verbal prompts are insufficient

A Positive Behaviour Support Plan (PBSP) is created for pupils who present a foreseeable risk.

Staff are always expected to consider:

1. Is this in the child's best interests?
2. Can a less intrusive intervention work?
3. Do I need to act now?



4. Am I the right person to intervene?
5. Is this absolutely necessary?

8. Staff training

The Springfield School Behaviour Policy and accompanying documents are shared with all staff as part of their initial Induction programme.

All physical interventions must be carried out by staff trained in Team Teach, BILD accredited behaviour support approach. This is offered as both whole school training to class-based staff as required, and also through supplementary class-team specific additional training sessions as specific needs arise, e.g. hair pulling

Training includes:

- The legal framework
- Understanding triggers
- Verbal and non-verbal de-escalation
- Positive handling techniques (last resort)
- Risk reduction
- Post-incident repair and reflection

Training is refreshed regularly for all staff, and new staff receive induction.

9. Recording, reporting and review

9.1 Recording

All incidents involving:

- Physical intervention
- Significant dysregulation
- Injury or near miss
- High-risk behaviour are recorded on CPOMS within 24 hours.

Records are reviewed and approved by Senior Leadership Team.

Informing families

Parents/carers are informed:

- Where physical intervention has been used
- Where a new PBSP is created or updated
- Where patterns of behaviour raise new concerns



9.2 Monitoring

School Leaders, Trustees and the Rapid Improvement Board monitor:

- Frequency and type of interventions
- Patterns across pupils, staff or environments
- Training needs
- Opportunities to reduce restrictive practice

A nominated RIB member holds link responsibility for behaviour and safeguarding.

10. Child-on-child abuse and bullying

We are vigilant to all forms of harmful behaviour between pupils, including:

- Bullying (including prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Cyberbullying
- Sexual harassment or harmful sexual behaviour
- Physical or emotional harm

For further detail, see the Anti-Bullying Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and KCSIE 2025.

11. Attendance and behaviour

We recognise the strong link between:

- Emotional regulation
- Sense of safety
- Positive relationships
- Attendance and engagement

Behaviour support is integrated with pastoral and attendance procedures. (*see Attendance Policy*)

12. Roles and responsibilities

Head Teacher

- Ensures consistent implementation of the policy
- Maintains the register of trained staff
- Oversees incident reporting and PBSPs
- Ensures staff training and induction
- Reports to the Local Academy Board
- Reviews the policy annually



Staff

- Attend training as required
- Maintain a safe, nurturing environment
- Use appropriate child specific de-escalation strategies as the default response
- Use physical intervention only when lawful and necessary
- Record incidents accurately
- Work in partnership with pupils and families

Rapid Improvement Board

- Oversees policy implementation
- Receives regular monitoring reports
- Ensures statutory compliance

13. Related policies and documents

The following policies should be read alongside this Behaviour, Touch and Physical Intervention Policy:

- Positive Behaviour Support Plans Guidance
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy- School
- Attendance Policy
- Manual Handling Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs
- Complaints Policy
- Managing Allegations Against Staff
- Health and Safety Policy

Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance

- Use of Reasonable Force (DfE, 2013)
- Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention (2019)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (DfE)
- Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)