



## **RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION (RPI) POLICY**

### **School values and policies**

*The statement below is about the school's aims, values and principles related to pupil well-being (physical, social and emotional). This will be the statement underpinning other t+centres policies.*

The school behaviour policy outlines how staff at Taliesin Education Ltd (t+centres) create and maintain good order and relationships through positive approaches. These approaches are successful for the vast majority of the time. Restricted Physical Intervention (RPI) is used only as a last resort, for the shortest possible time and on a strict basis – mainly to prevent or minimise harm to self or others. This policy on the use of RPI supplements the main behaviour policy. Both should be read in conjunction with t+centres' SEN Policy, the Health & Safety Policy, and Safeguarding Policy.

### **Safeguarding statement**

Our commitment to Safeguarding underpins our provision and it is especially important when Restricted Physical Intervention takes place as this is an area of high risk and needs to be handled with the utmost care, with all staff confident of how to make assured and safe interventions and manage the whole process effectively. The Head of Centre and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are aware that in a school whose students have Social, Educational and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, are on the autistic spectrum and have other complex conditions, the approach needs to be one of understanding and empathy with students with staff recognising that behaviours occur as a means of communication. However, the safety of students and staff is paramount and the environment needs to be as calm and ordered as possible. In addition, students find their own behaviour upsetting and look to staff to help them manage it. The school has a very positive record of using RPI with incidents of use kept to a minimum.

Our RPI Policy has reference to legislation (Use of Reasonable Force, Department for Education (DfE)) and is updated in response to statutory guidance and national guidance.

### **Purpose of policy**

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance so that any RPI that they undertake is carried out in a way that supports the values and principles described above. In particular, it aims to describe the circumstances in which RPI is an appropriate response and how staff at t+centres will fulfil its responsibilities in those circumstances.

The Head of Centre will be responsible for ensuring that staff and parents are aware of the policy. S/he will ensure that any necessary training/awareness-raising takes place so that all staff and volunteers know what responsibilities they have.

### **Physical touch**

The Senior Leadership Team and staff at t+centres believe that physical touch is an essential part of human relationships. In our school, adults may well use touch to prompt, to give reassurance or to provide support in PE.

Although RPI is used only as a last resort when other approaches have failed, we acknowledge that some students will seek out physical interventions and for such students this may represent a form of extreme 'holding' which meets their needs at a given time and at a certain point of their development. This however does not in any way promote the use of RPI except where absolutely necessary and would be administered based on criteria mentioned below; also, it is anticipated that this need may ultimately be met and succeeded by less physical means of management and self-management.

To use touch/physical support in a positive way e.g. a 'wrap' to contain a younger child, staff will adhere to the following principles. It must:

- be non-invasive and non-abusive, with no intention to cause pain or injury;
- be in the best interests of the child or young person and others;
- have a clear educational purpose (e.g. to promote access the curriculum or to improve social relationships by gaining control of behaviour);
- take account of gender issues.

At t+centres, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL is responsible for ensuring relevant staff members are aware of any pupil who finds physical touch unwelcome. Such sensitivity may arise from the pupil's cultural background, personal history, age, or particular condition or Special Needs.

## What do we mean by Physical Intervention?

It is helpful to distinguish between:

Definition	Action	Examples
<p>Non-restrictive physical interventions. (As already stated, touch/physical contact is a small but important and natural part of teacher-pupil relationships in our school).</p>	<p>Either where the child's movement is not restricted or where the child is held supportively but such that they will be released immediately should they so wish.</p>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guiding/shepherding a person from A to B – walking away from danger</li> <li>• removal of a cause of distress if possible</li> </ul>
<p>Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPI)</p>	<p>Prevent, impede or restrict movement or mobility. Restrictive physical intervention e.g. preventative holding; to use minimum force to direct.</p>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• isolating a child in a room for a short period of time (accompanied)</li> <li>• holding a pupil for a certain time</li> <li>• blocking a person's path/ inter-positioning</li> </ul>

and between:

<p>Emergency/unplanned interventions</p>	<p>Those which occur in response to unforeseen events such as, for example, fights between students, a student going into crisis.</p>
<p>Planned interventions</p>	<p>In which staff employ, where necessary, pre-arranged strategies and methods which are based on a risk assessment and recorded in an individual plan for the management of a student.</p>

## When is RPI permissible at t+centres?

Restrictive Physical Intervention is used in response to circumstance at t+centres when other methods of management of extreme behaviour have failed. However, it will be necessary when its aim is to prevent a pupil injuring themselves or others, damaging property or seriously disrupting the learning of others to the extent that they need to be removed from a classroom.

Section 550A also allows the use of force '*to prevent a pupil from engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline...*'. However, the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention for this purpose is acceptable only in rare circumstances at t+centres.

These circumstances include:

- Students interacting in a dangerously rough manner or behaving in a threatening manner towards other students or staff, or attacking others in a manner to injure them.
- Where there is a need to prevent students damaging property, for example throwing a heavy object at/near expensive school equipment or other equipment or deliberately trying to destroy property when showing acting-out behaviours.
- Where there is a need for staff to intervene to separate students who are fighting or threatening to fight.
- Where students abscond, when this behaviour is assessed as high risk for reasons such as danger of traffic accidents or other problems within the community, and they need to be returned to the centre for their own safety. This intervention will be risk assessed and on some occasions it may be more appropriate to call the police.

## Risk assessment

The use of a Restrictive Physical Intervention will be the outcome of a professional judgement made by staff on the basis of this school policy. It is avoided whenever an alternative solution is possible and will **never** be used for staff convenience or as a form of power.

**Restrictive Physical Intervention will *only* be considered if other behaviour management options have proved ineffective or are judged to be inappropriate, or in an emergency situation.**

Before deciding to intervene in this way, staff will weigh up whether the risk of not intervening is greater than the risk of intervening. Any actions will be carried out with the student's best interests at heart. Physical intervention will never be used to punish a pupil or cause pain, injury or humiliation. The school recognises that some forms of RPI are very distressing and that students may have experienced regular RPI in the past and found it very threatening or, in some cases, it has become used so frequently that it has become commonplace. The school believes that RPI could, when misused, be counterproductive, increasing the anger and emotional distress which the school is proactively aiming to lessen as a whole.

Staff members are not expected to intervene physically against their better judgement, nor are they expected to place themselves at unreasonable risk. In such circumstances, they must take steps to minimise risks, for example, by removing other pupils and calling for assistance.

### Who may use RPI?

At t+centres, all teachers and teaching assistants are authorised, provided they have been trained in *Team Teach* methods. This applies to all staff, but should there be new staff in post who have not yet received training, they would not be allowed to physically intervene. The Head of Centre will ensure that all staff are aware of the guidance and understand what is involved. The Head of Centre will review this list of users regularly to ensure that it is up-to-date.

Supply staff will not be authorised to use Restrictive Physical Interventions except if they have been specifically authorised by the Head of Centre and they can provide evidence of recent training in the method.

Parents and any volunteers in the school are not given authorisation to use RPI. Staff from the local education authority may have their own policies about the care and control of pupils but, whilst on the premises, they will be expected to be aware of, and operate within, the policy of this school.

### Occasions where RPI is indicated

RPI will be used only after other methods of defusing the situation have been tried and were unsuccessful. These include:

- Talkdown and diversion, in particular the tone of voice being used in a calming way, soothing and reassuring;
- However, speech should be kept to the minimum (as the student's brain, being in a high state of arousal, will not be functioning in a logical way); reminders of positive outcomes to anxiety and crisis in the past;
- Drawing on previously agreed strategies when the young person was calm, when these can be stated;
- Being patient and allowing the young person to regain control when they are able.

When a RPI is justified, staff will use '*reasonable force*'. This is the degree of force '*warranted by the situation*'. It will '*be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident and the consequences it is intended to prevent*'. (DfE guidance) Any force used will always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result and for the shortest amount of time.

Staff members will also be made aware by training from the Head of Centre, that any RPI has to be understood in the context of working with children and young people with a variety of special and complex needs and that they need to understand that sometimes it is possible that personal psychological factors may negatively affect how the member of staff treats the student. The psychological implications of RPI are discussed within Team Teach training and in other training sessions. Should an intervention be inappropriate, this would promptly be discussed with the Head of Centre and the more appropriate response detailed so that it may inform future practice.

The school practises high levels of vigilance to ensure that no hints of a counterculture (e.g. a member of staff following their own agenda) is emerging.

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### Summarising:

Staff will:

- use the minimum amount of force for the minimum amount of time;
- avoid causing pain or injury; avoid holding or putting pressure on joints;
- in general, hold long bones only;
- we will **never** hold a pupil face down on the ground or in any position that might increase the risk of suffocation; hence we do not use the Team Teach advanced training which in part focuses on this approach.

During an incident, the member of staff involved will tell the pupil that his behaviour may be leading to an RPI. This will not be used as a threat or said in a way that could inflame the situation. Staff will not act out of anger or frustration. They will try to adopt a calm, measured approach and maintain communication with the pupil at all times, trying to avert the situation or minimising its length.

*Examples of acceptable RPI are listed above. Examples of actions that are unacceptable are:*

- responses in which anger is present which may affect how the student is dealt with – if so staff need to allow someone to replace them in carrying out the RPI;
- interventions which are disproportionate to the student's behaviour.

In an emergency, staff must summon assistance by contacting a member of the Senior Leadership Team

### The place of RPI within broader behavioural planning

If, through the school's special needs assessment procedures, it is determined that an RPI is likely to be appropriate at times, to help a pupil make progress, e.g. through the setting of a boundary, a risk assessment will be carried out following the school's guidelines and this will be detailed in the students' Individual Education/Behaviour Plan.

This plan will aim to reduce the likelihood of the need for RPI as well as describing how such intervention will be carried out. This plan will be discussed with parents/carers. When it involves the use of a planned RPI in certain circumstances, as part of the plan, medical colleagues will be consulted if this approach is relevant to the student's condition/s.

Before the plan is implemented, any necessary training or guidance will be provided for the staff involved. The Head of Centre will be responsible for establishing staff needs and for organising necessary training.

### Following up incidents - recording

After the use of a restrictive physical intervention, the following steps will be taken:

- Details of the incident will be promptly recorded on the designated form by all adults involved.
- Recording will be completed within 12 hours whenever possible. Staff will be offered the opportunity to seek advice from a senior colleague or professional representative when compiling their report.

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- Any injuries suffered by those involved will be recorded following normal school procedures.
- The Head of Centre will check that there is no cause for concern regarding the actions of adults involved. If it is felt that an action has '*caused or put a child at risk of significant harm*' the Head of Centre will follow the school's child protection procedures and also inform parents/carers.
- Parents/carers will be informed by the Head of Centre on the day of the incident. If this is initially done by phone, it will be followed up in writing. Parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding an incident.
- Support/debriefing will be available for adults and pupils who have been involved in any incident involving Restrictive Physical Interventions. This will be provided by the SLT.

Arrangements for recording and informing parents in the case of a planned RPI will be followed as agreed beforehand but broadly will follow the same pattern as above.

The Head of Centre will use the records kept to analyse patterns of behaviour at set periods of time and so decide whether responses are being effective. Data analysing numbers of incidents, serious incidents and RPI incidents will be used to assess whether RPI has increased or decreased over a set period of time.

### **Complaints procedure**

Any complaint with regard to RPI will first be considered in the light of the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection procedures, following appropriate guidance. If child protection procedures are found not to be appropriate, the school's complaint procedures will be followed. Risk assessment reviews will take place when a child or young person enters the school and will be reviewed in accordance with their behaviour plan. This will be half termly unless the risk is high, when it will be more frequent.

### **Parent and carer / other party complaints**

Parents and carers have the right to access our policies with regard to Complaints, RPI and Safeguarding if they have any concerns about the actions of any member of staff during an RPI. Policies are available on our website or a hard copy can be read in the office and discussed with SLT. They will be helped to make a formal complaint if this is required.

## Disclaimer in the light of working realities

### Disclaimer – Team Teach

- In an effort to safeguard everyone involved in a violent incident where physical interventions are necessary: the skills and techniques taught have been included as a result of an ongoing risk assessed review. The results are reported at the steering group meetings at Team Teach.
- Whilst some physical injury potential can be reduced, there always remains some risk when two or more people engage and force is used to protect, release or restrain.

### Working realities

The students placed at t+centres frequently have issues around expressing anger, and sometimes deep infantile rage, which can be expressed often without warning or perceivable antecedents, in a physical and destructive manner, making the possibility of physical intervention higher than in other establishments. Although we literally use force only as a last resort, to protect other students and/or staff, it does sometimes happen and a student or member of staff may sustain a minor injury.

In response to advice from Team Teach, we include in our policy the following statement that reflects the working realities and likely consequences when individuals are involved in an incident involving use of force:

*...‘Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the service user 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 service user remains safe.’ (George Matthews – Team Teach Director)*



## Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) Policy

### **History and implementation of this RPI Policy:**

Accepted by SLT in this format: September 2016

Approved by t+centres Governors: September 2020

Last revised: September 2023

To be reviewed: September 2024

SLT, all staff and governors have read, discussed and contributed to this policy.

The Head of Centre will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

The policy will be reviewed annually provided it is successfully implemented with positive results. Should this not be so, it will be revised within a shorter time scale, e.g. six monthly. Its effectiveness will be assessed in terms of the number of RPI incidents which have taken place over the six monthly or yearly period of time.

Our RPI Policy has reference to new legislation and is updated in response to statutory guidance.

### **Personnel responsible for Safeguarding:**

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Child Protection Officer – Carlee Ridpath

Deputy DSL and CP Officer – Barry Coppins

Deputy DSL – Wes Bell

This training is undertaken every two years

Team Teach training for all t+centres staff last took place in January 2022

Next Team Teach training for all t+centres staff booked for January 2024.