

Behaviour, De-escalation and Physical Intervention Policy

Document control	Detail
Policy title	Behaviour, De-escalation and Physical Intervention Policy
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Status	Approved for use
Policy owner	Hannah Lewis
Approved by	Nathan Warr
Applies to	Directors, employees, tutors, associate tutors, subcontractors, volunteers and any person working on behalf of PACE Education Pathways
Date approved	21/08/2026
Next review date	12 months from approval, or earlier where a review trigger applies
Review trigger	Earlier review required if statutory guidance changes, the service model changes, or a serious incident, complaint, audit finding or safeguarding concern identifies a need for review.
Linked documents	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Staff Code of Conduct and Low-Level Concerns Policy; Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy; SEND, Equality and Reasonable Adjustments Policy; Incident Reporting Policy; Pupil Risk Assessment; Health and Safety and Risk Assessment Policy; Lone Working and Home Visit Policy; Staff Supervision and Case Review Policy; Workforce Competency and Compliance Register.

Governance note

Behaviour support must be delivered alongside safeguarding, SEND, risk assessment and staff conduct arrangements. Where behaviour indicates risk of harm, possible unmet need, safeguarding concern or a serious incident, safeguarding and incident reporting procedures take priority and must be followed without delay.

1. Purpose

PACE works with pupils who may be anxious, excluded, returning from absence, neurodivergent, traumatised, disengaged or experiencing social, emotional or mental health needs. Behaviour is understood as communication and should be approached through prevention, relationship, clear boundaries and calm adult response.

The purpose of this policy is to protect pupils and staff, support learning and engagement, and ensure that any behavioural incident is managed proportionately and recorded appropriately.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all PACE activity, including home-based sessions, community sessions, online sessions, school-based provision and transition or reintegration activities.

3. Guidance framework

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- DfE behaviour and attendance principles where relevant
- SEND Code of Practice principles
- Equality Act 2010 reasonable adjustment duties
- PACE Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- PACE Lone Working and Home Visit Policy

4. Positive behaviour approach

- PACE will seek to understand behaviour in context, including unmet learning needs, SEND, trauma, anxiety, fatigue, sensory needs, family stress, safeguarding risks and previous education experiences.
- Staff will use clear routines, achievable tasks, calm language, positive reinforcement, choice within boundaries and predictable endings.
- Behaviour expectations should be shared with pupils and parents/carers at induction in an age-appropriate way.
- Reasonable adjustments must be considered where behaviour is connected to disability, SEND or mental health need.

5. Pupil behaviour plans

Where a pupil has known behaviour risks, a proportionate behaviour support plan should be agreed before provision starts. This may be incorporated into the pupil risk assessment or individual learning plan/EHCP.

- known triggers and early warning signs;
- successful calming strategies;
- communication preferences;
- reasonable adjustments;
- actions staff should avoid;
- when to pause or end a session;
- who must be contacted after incidents.

6. De-escalation

Staff should use de-escalation before consequences or enforcement. De-escalation may include reducing demands, using calm tone, giving space, offering a break, changing activity, validating feelings without accepting unsafe behaviour, and allowing time for the pupil to regain control.

- Staff must avoid shouting, sarcasm, humiliation, threats, cornering, unnecessary confrontation or physical blocking.
- Staff must not use behaviour management approaches that shame pupils or escalate dysregulation.
- If behaviour cannot be safely de-escalated, the session should be paused or ended.

7. Physical intervention position

PACE does not use planned restraint or physical intervention as part of its education model. Staff must not restrain pupils except in an immediate emergency where it is necessary to prevent serious harm and where no safer

alternative is available. Any emergency physical intervention must be proportionate, last for the shortest possible time, and be reported immediately to the DSL/governance lead and commissioner as appropriate.

8. Prohibited practice

- Corporal punishment, humiliation, intimidation or degrading treatment;
- Locking a pupil in a room or preventing them from leaving unless there is an immediate safety emergency;
- Physical intervention as a behaviour consequence;
- Using personal information, family circumstances or vulnerabilities to shame a pupil;
- Informal exclusion from provision without recording and commissioner notification.

9. Session pause or termination

Staff may pause or end a session if behaviour creates a risk to the pupil, staff member, household, public or property. The decision should be recorded and followed by review. Ending a session is not a punishment; it is a safety and safeguarding control. This should also be recorded on MyConcern and the DSL informed.

10. Recording and reporting

- All significant behaviour incidents must be recorded on the incident form.
- Safeguarding concerns must be recorded separately using the safeguarding concern process.
- Parents/carers and commissioners should be informed in line with agreed reporting arrangements.
- Patterns of behaviour should be reviewed and used to update the pupil risk assessment and learning plan.

11. Post-incident support and review

After an incident, PACE should consider the impact on the pupil, staff member and future provision. A restorative conversation may be appropriate where it is safe and meaningful. Repeated incidents should trigger a review of suitability, risk controls, referral information, support required and whether the placement remains appropriate.

Appendix A - De-escalation quick guide

- Stay calm and lower the emotional temperature.
- Reduce language and avoid arguing.
- Offer limited choices.
- Create space and reduce audience.
- Pause demands where appropriate.
- Name the boundary calmly.
- End the session if safety cannot be maintained.
- Record, report and review.

12. Training and competence

Staff must receive induction in PACE behaviour expectations, de-escalation, professional boundaries, incident reporting and safeguarding. PACE does not rely on planned restraint as part of its delivery model. Any role or

placement requiring specialist restrictive-intervention competence must be separately assessed, authorised, trained and insured before delivery.

13. Monitoring and assurance

Significant incidents, repeated session termination, emergency physical intervention and patterns of dysregulation will be reviewed through case review and incident-management arrangements. Learning must be reflected in the pupil risk assessment, reasonable adjustments, staff supervision and commissioner review where required.