

All Saints Primary School
Physical Intervention Policy

This policy is to be used in conjunction with the school's behaviour and assertive discipline policy.

Introduction

Section 5550A of the Education Act 1996 clarifies the position about the use of physical interventions by authorised staff. Physical force it reminds us must be reasonable and must only occur where there is a danger of injury to the child themselves or to others, serious damage to property or to prevent a serious break down of discipline, no definition is given of this, however.

The LEA guidelines however clearly state that physical interventions can only be used when there is a danger to the child themselves or to others and not in these other circumstances.

Physical intervention should not be used to gain compliance from the child, however where the lack of compliance poses a danger or potential danger to the child themselves or others physical intervention may be considered.

What is Physical Intervention?

Physical intervention involves the use of physical force in order to control a child's behaviour. We must differentiate between children being escorted and the use of physical intervention. Staff will need to make their own assessment as to whether they have employed a physical intervention in order to control behaviour but any restrictive interventions including a single elbow both sides of the child would be considered a physical intervention. All physical interventions must be recorded (see section on recording)

The Role of Physical Intervention

The role of physical intervention is very much a minor role in the school's positive strategy for the management of children's behaviour. Physical intervention must be seen as the last resort and it is expected that staff will have exhausted all other strategies in order to avoid the aggression. These strategies include:

- Redirection
- Planned ignoring
- Calm talking

The school will ensure that where physical intervention is likely to be required this will be outlined within a physical intervention plan which will form part of the overall behaviour plan for the child. Once completed both the behaviour plan and physical intervention plan will be shared with parents and where appropriate the social worker for the child. Parents are asked to sign the physical intervention plan once seen. Where parents disagree with the behaviour plan or physical intervention plan presented, the school will implement the minimum necessary in order to ensure the safety of the child

and others. Where physical intervention strategies are outlined, trained and practised staff must always be available with that child.

The use of physical intervention will be based on the risk assessment made by staff in each individual circumstance, and factors that need to be taken into account include:

- The environment in which the situation is taking place
- The number and vulnerability of people nearby
- The ability to remove other children/people from the immediate environment
- Whether or not alternative strategies are appropriate in the individual circumstances.

Recording Physical Intervention

Any physical intervention **must** be recorded on the Physical Intervention Record Form. These must be done immediately following an intervention and must be handed to Jackie Beech or Amy Darby who will enter the physical intervention into the school's Physical Intervention Log book. Failure to record this information will be treated under disciplinary rules. The recording of interventions is necessary to monitor the situation with each child and to provide protection for staff involved.

Following a physical intervention staff will receive support and an opportunity for a debrief. It is recognised that having to undertake such an intervention is very stressful to the staff involved and staff often need time to unload. Time must also be given after the situation has calmed for the child, where appropriate, to be able to talk about the situation and their feelings. This may prove difficult for some children but staff must endeavour wherever possible to provide this opportunity.

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to monitor the use of physical interventions in the school. Where a number have occurred with an individual child it may be necessary to revisit the child's behaviour plan.

Where escorted walks are used with a child or where self defence strategies are used e.g. for biting, hair pulling etc this must be recorded on the relevant form

Where any Physical Intervention has been used a copy of the record will be sent to the LEA.

Team Teach

The school adopted the Team Teach approach to positive handling of challenging pupils. Team Teach, like the school, believes in that physical intervention should form only a very minor role in dealing with children who challenge. Physical intervention strategies are only justified if:

- The individual is causing damage to him/herself or others.
- The parents and all staff working with the pupil consent to the implementation of the technique
- Staff concerned have received training in appropriate physical intervention strategies
- It is not being used as a punishment

- It is not being used as a substitute for a positive behaviour management programme
- The strategies are detailed in an Individual Physical Intervention Plan (Appendix G)

Which staff have had physical intervention training and what programme was it? E.g. team teach

Physical Intervention in Unforeseen Circumstances

In the rare event of an emergency situation occurring where there is no agreed programme in place, but physical intervention is needed, school staff will be expected to act 'in loco parentis'. Physical intervention in unforeseen circumstances may be required to bring control to a pupil who has lost self-control and is engaged in a behaviour that is dangerous or damaging to him/herself or others. In such cases physical intervention must:-

- Be carried out sensitively
- Provide a safe and caring situation for the pupil
- Must never be punitive
- Carried out in a manner that preserves the dignity of the pupil
- Where possible should not be in a public place
- Be recorded on a Physical Intervention Record (Appendix H)

Risk Assessments

In the majority of cases strategies for minimalising risks are included as part of the child's behaviour plan and physical intervention plan. In extreme cases a separate risk assessment will be produced on a child where there is considerable health and safety risk to children or staff.

Responding to complaints

The use of physical intervention can lead to allegations of inappropriate or excessive use of force against staff. Where such a complaint has been received by the Head Teacher the person making the complaint will be asked to provide a statement regarding the incident. Statements will also be taken individually from all staff involved. Where it is felt that the allegations need further investigation the incident will be dealt with under the school's child protection procedures. The member of staff will be suspended only if it is felt that:

- The child/children are in imminent danger from the individual
- Where the member of staff remaining in school would prejudice the investigation.
- Where the school has been instructed to suspend by Police or Social Services.

Objectives

- to maintain the safety of pupils and staff
- to prevent serious breaches of school discipline
- to prevent serious damage to property

Minimising the need to physically intervene

We will:

- create a calm environment that minimizes the risk of incidents that might require physical intervention arising.
- Use Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) approaches to teach pupils how to manage conflict and strong feelings.
- De-escalate incidents if they do arise.
- Only use force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force.
- Provide risk assessments and positive handling plans for individual pupils.

Individual Rights

The School recognises that all staff and pupils have rights. We must preserve the dignity of the child, ensure safety, freedom from abuse and stigmatisation.

We must therefore strive to ensure that we do not humiliate either our colleagues or the children in the School.

We should avoid situations where:-

- we shout at children
- we over-react to problems
- we use sarcasm and insensitivity
- we use encompassing or excessive punishment.

Support for Staff

In dealing with children with challenging behaviour all staff should ensure that they support each other. No member of staff should feel demeaned or undermined by another member of staff and no-one should feel a sense of guilt when strategies for dealing with behaviour do not work. The School will regularly spend time discussing behaviour and all staff should promote and support a sense of openness and frankness in discussion without any hint of threat or criticism.

Staff may feel that when they may need to 'unload' concerns about a child's behaviour, that this is considered desirable and good practice and they should seek to see a senior member of staff when required. In particular following an incident of aggression against a member of staff a debrief with a senior member of staff will take place. All aggression against staff will be recorded. In the case of minor injuries e.g. scratch staff are required to complete the minor injuries form. Where there is a more serious injury e.g. a bite which has broken the skin a violence to employees form must be

completed and sent to the LEA. Staff are encouraged to ensure they are covered by up to date vaccinations. Where staff have difficulty obtaining vaccinations e.g. for Hepatitis B the school will fund the treatment.

When a member of staff has been involved in an incident that has resulted in them being physically hurt or subjected to extreme trauma that person should be released from the classroom for an appropriate period of time.

Staff need to be aware of what strategies are available for the management of behaviours which cause concern and have clear procedures to follow where pupils fail to respond to classroom interventions to improve behaviour.

Staff are encouraged to consult colleagues as 'critical friends' concerning problems and seek out positive solutions in conjunction with the pupils.

Staff should work as a team, supporting and relieving one another during times of stress in dealing with a child's behaviour. This team should not be solely seen as just classroom staff. There will be times when both other classroom staff from the Key Stage and senior management will need to relieve within class groups where the behaviour is particularly challenging in order to give staff time away from the situation.

The success of behaviour support depends upon this ongoing and comprehensive support system for staff.