

## **The Southover Partnership Physical Intervention Policy**

Date adopted	September 2014
Date reviewed	September 2017
Next Review	September 2019

Central to this policy is the understanding that any physical Intervention used by staff must be in accord with the idea of "reasonable force" and used only as a last resort once all other strategies have been exhausted.

There is no legal definition of reasonable force. The use of force can only be regarded as reasonable if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it and the degree of force employed is proportionate to the level of challenging behaviour presented or the consequences it is intended to prevent.

It is essential that any discussion of physical intervention is set in the wider context of education and behaviour management: it should not be seen as an isolated technique. Most of the time there will be no need for physical intervention and other methods can be used.

Staff implementing this policy should be aware of and have access to:

- DfEE Circular 10/98: The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils
- The Children's Act 1989
- Guidance for Restrictive Physical Interventions/Department for Education and Skills. (July 2002)  
*Guidance for restrictive physical interventions: How to provide safe services for people with learning disabilities and autistic spectrum disorder (Aug 2002)*
- DfEE Circular, The Use of Physical Interventions to Control or Restrain Pupils in SEN Settings
- Basis Training (UK) Limited

### **Ethos**

- Work with pupils is done within an atmosphere of co-operation and mutual respect.
- Boundaries and behaviour expectations are clear and appropriate (see Behaviour Management Policy). Pupils and their carers and staff are aware of the system of rewards and sanctions and positive behaviour is encouraged.
- The needs of the individual will be acknowledged and respected, taking into account the diversity of experience, race, culture, disability, language, community, sex and gender.

## **Expectations**

- The School will provide a safe, positive environment.
- The staff to be aware of the behaviour needs of each pupil
- Pupils are encouraged to manage their own behaviour appropriately.
- If a pupil is displaying difficult and challenging behaviour, the aim is to de-escalate the situation and maintain the safety of all the staff and pupils.
- Physical intervention will only be used rarely and as a last resort.
- Parents/carers, pupils and staff will be familiarised with the situations where physical intervention might be necessary.
- All staff will be trained in the same method of restraint.
- All incidents will be recorded and logged in the incident book
- Pupils will be given the opportunity to reflect on the incident either immediately afterwards or the following day. This will be recorded.
- Staff will be given the opportunity to discuss the incident and be debriefed.
- Parents/carers will be informed as necessary.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

Staff should always maintain appropriate relationships with children/young people. Physical contact can describe a range of behaviours including appropriate demonstrations of affection; staff should not be deterred from consoling and comforting a pupil in distress. Staff need to be aware of personal boundaries for themselves and the pupils.

## **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

Physical intervention should be an act of care and control, not a punishment or form of discipline.

Physical restraint is the positive application of force with the intention of overpowering the child in order to protect a child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property.

It must be emphasised that physical restraint must always be seen as the last resort.

## **PROHIBITED MEASURES**

Staff should never take any action (physical or verbal) that is likely to cause pain or humiliation to a pupil.

- **Corporal Punishment**  
Any application of force as punishment, including slapping, throwing objects, rough handling, pushing or punching is not acceptable.
- **Deprivation of Food and Drink**

It is unacceptable to force a pupil to eat foods that they dislike, or deny them food of their choice as a form of punishment.

- **Intimate Physical Searches**

Intimate physical searches of children are totally unacceptable. Occasionally, and not as a punishment, a search of a pupil's clothing may be necessary – e.g. searching for a dangerous object.

## **DEFINING PHYSICAL INTERVENTION**

Any form of physical contact with the intention of containing the behaviour of a child/young person. Physical intervention includes a range of actions from an arm around a shoulder to a restraint.

Physical intervention should only be used as a measure of control when there is a situation that involves.

- Risk of serious harm to the child/young person or other persons present.
- Serious damage to property is likely to occur.
- Action where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

The principles relating to the use of physical intervention may be summarised as below:

- i) Staff should have good grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary to prevent a child/young person from significantly injuring himself/herself or others, or causing serious damage to property.
- ii) Staff should take steps in advance to avoid the need for physical intervention eg. through dialogue and diversion and the pupil should be warned verbally that physical intervention would be used unless he/she desists.
- iii) A dialogue should be kept up with the pupil.
- iv) Use, whenever possible a member of staff who has an established relationship with the pupil so they can explain what they are doing and why.
- v) A pupil may be successfully diverted from destructive or disruptive behaviour by being led away by the hand, arm, or by an arm around the shoulder.
- vi) Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied; physical restraint should only be attempted when there are sufficient staff.
- vii) Every effort should be made to secure the presence of other staff before using physical intervention. These staff can act as assistants and witnesses.
- viii) As soon as is safe the physical intervention should be gradually relaxed to allow the pupil to regain self control.
- ix) Physical intervention should be an act of care and control; not a punishment.
- x) Physical intervention should not be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate risk to people or property.

- xi) It is important that the issues of age, sex, size, personal history and background and the relationship between the child/young person and the staff involved are considered wherever possible.
- xii) There must be care about the way in which a child/young person is held to avoid any contact with intimate parts of the body.
- xiii) When physical intervention is being used a staff member of the same gender should be present wherever possible.
- xiv) If staff are not confident about their ability to contain a particular situation or type or behaviour, consideration should be given to involving the police.

## **RECORDING AND REPORTING OF INCIDENTS**

- Staff must record all incidents of physical intervention. These forms and records are held centrally and signed by staff and management.
- Significant incidents must be recorded and reported in line with Council and local procedures.

## **MONITORING**

- Staff should be clear about the expectations for informing management, parents and reporting and recording incidents
- The records will be checked regularly to ensure that they comply with policy and procedures and to monitor trends and practices.
- There will be regular review of practices and staff training needs.
- A list of all staff authorised to use physical intervention will be maintained
- All cases of physical intervention should be reported recorded and evaluated.
- All young people involved in a physical intervention should have access to a debrief session, (a discussion about strategies that the young person could use in the future) and a complaints procedure.
- This policy will be reviewed every 12 months.