

ST MARY'S CE (A) FIRST SCHOOL POLICY DOCUMENT FOR PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Philosophy

At St Mary's CE (A) First School, we are committed to a positive behaviour policy which encourages children to make positive behaviour choices, supported by restorative practice. Using our vision of the Good Samaritan, we use positive role modelling and support children to take responsibility for their own behaviour. On rare occasions, circumstances may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff. Our policy for physical intervention is based upon the following principles:

1. Physical intervention should be used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed.
2. Any physical contact should be the minimum required.
3. Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
4. Incidents must be recorded and reported to the Headteacher as soon as possible.
5. Parents will be informed of each incident.

The Legal Framework

Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 allows 'teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Head Teacher who have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- causing injury to his/herself or others
- committing an offence and/or damaging property
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order & discipline'

Our Approach

At St Mary's CE (A) First School we aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort in a minority of situations. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and therefore this policy should be read in connection with our Restorative Practice & Behaviour Policy.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the school's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in *loco parentis* and have a 'Duty of Care' to all children they are in charge of. They must, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure all pupils' safety and wellbeing.

Staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

Use of physical restraint

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention or re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allows the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint, although there is no absolute definition of this. What constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

In all circumstances, alternative methods should be used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint, a last resort.

When physical restraint becomes necessary, always:

- * Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- * Use the minimum force necessary
- * Involve another member of staff if possible
- * Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- * Use simple and clear language
- * Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- * Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

Risk Assessment

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 child's best interests at heart. Physical intervention will never be used to punish a pupil or cause pain, injury or humiliation.

If, through the school's SEND assessment procedures, it is determined that a restrictive physical intervention is likely to be appropriate to help a pupil make progress, a risk assessment will be carried out following the school's guidelines.

If appropriate, an individual behaviour plan will then be drawn up for that pupil. If the plan includes restrictive physical intervention it will be as just one part of a whole approach to supporting the child's behaviour. The plan will outline:

- * our understanding of what the child is trying to achieve or communicate through their behaviour.*
- * how we adapt our environment to better meet the child's needs.*
- * how we teach and encourage the child to use new, more appropriate behaviours.*
- * how we reward the child when they make progress.*
- * how we respond when the child's behaviour is challenging, using restorative strategies*
- * how we use a range of approaches as direct alternatives to physical intervention - distraction, relocation, offering choices, restorative conversations.*

This plan will aim to reduce the likelihood of the need for restrictive physical intervention as well as describing how such intervention will be carried out. This plan will be discussed with parents. When it involves the use of a restrictive physical intervention within the risk assessment, advice will be sought from outside agencies. Before the plan is implemented, any necessary training or guidance will be provided for the staff involved. The headteacher will be responsible for establishing staff needs and for organising necessary training.

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

1. Strategies to be used prior to intervention
2. Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known
3. Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
4. Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
5. Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate
6. The school's duty of care to all pupils and staff

What to do after the use of a restrictive physical intervention

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

- * Details of the incident will be recorded by all adults involved immediately on CPoms.*
- * 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;*
- * Any injuries suffered by those involved will be recorded following normal school procedures;*
- * The Headteacher 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 Headteacher will follow the school's child protection procedures and also inform parents;*
- * Parents will be informed by the Headteacher on the day of the incident. If this is initially done by phone, it will be followed up in writing. Parents 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 Headteacher.*

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

The Headteacher will use the records kept to analyse patterns of behaviour and so decide whether responses are being effective. The Headteacher will report to the Governing Body annually.