

**Hampton Vale
Primary Academy**



Physical Intervention Policy

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1.0 Introduction and Rationale

1.1 This policy cannot be taken as an authoritative interpretation of the law, and we must be mindful of Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 and any subsequent legislation or judgments.

1.2 Children and young people need to be safe and aware of how they should behave. Some (generally only a few and very occasionally) lose control and need someone else to supply it. They need to know we are able to control them safely and confidently. Our pupils nearly always respond well to the school rules and conventions. Situations in which physical intervention may be needed are, therefore, likely to be relatively few in number.

1.3 Although the emphasis within this guidance is on physical intervention, all staff will recognise that the approaches described will generally only be appropriate as a last resort. They are not a substitute for the full range of professional approaches to behaviour management and techniques to minimise or avoid confrontation. In this context, the importance of training and professional development in minimising the need for physical intervention cannot be over-emphasised.

2.0 Definition

2.1 “Restrictive Physical Intervention” is the term used to describe interventions where bodily contact using force is used to control or manage a child’s behaviour. It refers to any instance in which a teacher or other adult authorised by the Headteacher has to use “reasonable force” to control or restrain students in circumstances that meet the following legally defined criteria

2.2 To prevent a child from committing a criminal offence (*this applies even if the child is below the age of criminal responsibility*)

2.3 To prevent a child from injuring self or other

2.4 To prevent or stop a child from causing serious damage to property (*including the child’s own property*)

2.5 To stop the child from engaging in any behaviour which is prejudicial to maintaining the good order and discipline at the Academy

2.6 There is no legal definition of “reasonable force”. However, there are two relevant considerations:

- The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of an incident warrant it;
- The degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent.

3.0 Principles

3.1 Maintaining the personal safety of staff, pupils and visitors may, on occasion, require the use of some form of physical intervention when other approaches are either inappropriate or have been tried and found to be ineffective. Staff should adopt one or more of the approaches described below in order to control a situation involving risk to the safety of staff or pupils.

3.2 The judgement over which approach to adopt in any circumstance will be based on the professional experience and expertise of the member of staff concerned taking account of:

- The duties and responsibilities relating to the approach of a good parent

- Action which is reasonable in relation to the circumstances, and
- An approach which is appropriate to the purpose.

3.3 It will also be recognised that the use of physical intervention outside the normal care programme for a student or pupil will generally require some form of debriefing for those involved.

4.0 **Recommended Approaches**

The age, understanding, and competence of the individual student will be taken into account when using these approaches.

4.1 *Talk and Warn*

Whenever and wherever possible, situations involving potential conflict or confrontation should be talked through. Pupils obviously have to be in a receptive state for this approach to be successful. Staff present will form a judgement about the suitability of this approach.

4.2 *Holding for security and to reduce anxiety where there is a potential for danger, even if the pupil is not yet out of control nor a particular source of danger to themselves or others at that time*

4.3 This approach will be appropriate when the student is anxious or confused. There may be situations when holding in this way defuses or pre-empts an escalation to a more violent confrontation. It is important, therefore, to ensure that the use of this approach is not interpreted as initiating aggression.

4.4 *Intervention when a pupil presents a danger to him/herself or others*

It will sometimes be necessary to intervene if a pupil is out of control and his/her behaviour poses a real or potential danger to himself or others. In some circumstances this may involve the combined efforts of more than one member of staff. All staff must be aware of the approaches which should be used and the type of techniques which might cause permanent injury, for example a neck lock, and which should therefore be avoided. There are no circumstances in which any necessary physical intervention can reasonably include striking a pupil, slapping or hitting.

4.5 *Audience Control*

Since it is well established that a pupil's behaviour is often adversely affected by the presence of an audience it will generally be helpful to remove the audience, or, if this is not possible, to remove the pupil in question from the audience.

4.6 Under no circumstances should this result in the pupil being taken into a closed room by a single member of staff. Another member of staff should be present or a door left open so that others are aware of the situation.

5.0. Additional Advice for Employees

5.1 In determining which approach or combination of approaches from those listed above should be followed, staff are expected to apply professional judgement to determine the level of danger to the pupil or to others, including themselves.

5.2 Physical intervention, when applied, should be passive in intent. Its purpose must only be to limit the pupil's ability to hurt him/herself or others with minimum application of force and through the limitation of movement rather than by physical blows. As soon as it is safe to do so the intervention should be gradually eased to allow the pupil to regain his/her self-control.

5.3 Whenever circumstances allow, assistance should be sought from other members of staff at an early stage. All staff aware of another member of staff in difficulty have a responsibility to provide assistance, support and a presence provided that this does not compromise other pupil's safety or well being.

5.4 Audience control presents particular problems. A useful contribution for an assisting member of staff may well be to remove the audience. Only if this is not possible, and the continued presence of the audience is likely to cause significant additional difficulty, should an attempt be made to remove the offending pupil since this will almost inevitably require the use of greater force.

5.5 Staff must remember throughout an incident that the principle purpose is to restore personal safety and security for all involved and to reduce the anxiety of the pupil. Whilst this will be difficult to acknowledge at times, opportunities should be taken to say this to the pupil, calmly and gently, at appropriate stages during any incident.

5.6 All staff who need to know should be made aware of each incident. All incidents, which result in interventions outside the normal care programme for individual pupils, should be recorded. Comprehensive notes, which should be signed and dated, should be completed by the member of staff present at the original incident, together with any members of staff involved either as witnesses or in providing assistance. It may also be appropriate to ask any pupils who were witnesses to provide a written note which should also be signed and dated.

5.7 Documentation in relation to such incidents should be forwarded to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

5.8 It is recommended that the normal care programme for pupils with particular physical or learning disabilities, who routinely require control or physical intervention, should be discussed in advance with parents or carers. In such circumstances, it would not be necessary to record each incident where routine control or intervention is used.

5.9 Departures from the routine should, of course, be recorded and discussed with parents or carers.

6.0 Follow up Actions

6.1 A full debrief of the incident which has led to the use of physical intervention should be led by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. This will include the student [if s/he is able to participate in such a debrief, taking into account any learning difficulties], the member of staff concerned and, especially in more serious cases, witnesses to the incident. Parents and carers should be routinely informed of any incident in which their child is involved in an incident where physical intervention was required.

6.2 None of these approaches prevent a member of staff defending him/herself if assaulted. However, all staff should understand the legal limits to self-defence, which require that only a response which is reasonable in the circumstances will be recognised as justified

in any subsequent legal action. Pre-emptive attacks are unlikely ever to be recognised by a court as reasonable.

7.0 Review and implementation

7.1 Unless otherwise required, this policy will not be reviewed for a period of two years.