

Dynamis Training :: Resources for Clients using Positive Handling in Schools

[model school policy]

Touch and the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention for all Staff working with Children & Young People

Policy and Guidance for Staff at School

Context

The Policy is best placed within the context of the school's Behaviour Policy; it will be part of a graduated response, and needs to be agreed in consultation with staff, governors, parents/carers, and pupils. It also connects to, and should be consistent with, policies on Health and Safety, Child Protection and safeguarding, Equal Opportunities, and Pastoral Care.

1. Introduction

At school we believe that pupils need to be safe, know how to behave, and know that the adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. For a very small minority of pupils the use of restrictive physical intervention may be needed, and, on such occasions, acceptable forms of intervention will be used.

[*Schools may wish to add their own statement here.]

The majority of pupils behave well and conform to the expectations of our school. We have responsibility to operate an effective behaviour policy that encompasses preventative strategies for tackling inappropriate behaviour in relation to the whole school, each class, and individual pupils.

All the school staff need to feel able to manage inappropriate risk and behaviour, and to have an understanding of what and how challenging behaviours might be communicated. They need to know what the options open to them are, and they need to be free of undue worries about the risks of legal action against them if they use appropriate physical intervention. Parents need to know that their children are safe with us, and they need to be properly informed if their child is the subject of a Restrictive Physical Intervention, including the nature of the intervention, and the rationale for its use.

2. Definition of 'restrictive physical intervention'

The Law allows for teachers and other persons authorised by the Head teacher to use Restrictive Physical Intervention to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following: -

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property
- engaging in any behaviour that is prejudicial to maintain the good order and discipline at the school

"Restrictive Physical Intervention" is the term used to include interventions where bodily contact using force is used. It refers to any instance in which a teacher or other adult authorised by the Head teacher has to, in specific circumstances, use "reasonable force"

Each school needs to compile a list here of staff groups eg MTAs, TAs, Caretaker etc. and in addition the Head teacher may give temporary authorisation to others eg parent helpers on a trip, centrally employed support staff.

4. Planning for the use of restrictive physical interventions inschool

Staff will use force which is reasonable in the circumstances that is believed to be necessary to restore safety and appropriate behaviour.

The principles relating to the intervention are as follows: -

- Restrictive Physical Intervention is an act of care and control, not punishment. It is never used to force compliance with staff instructions
- staff will only use it when there are reasonable grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary. The safety of all children at the school and the staff team will be balanced with the best interests of the child.
- staff will take steps in advance to avoid the need for Restrictive Physical Intervention through dialogue and diversion and at the level of understanding of the child or young person
- Force will only be used where it is necessary as a last resort and then in a way which is proportionate to the risk in the immediate circumstances.
- staff will be able to show that the intervention used was in keeping with the incident
- every effort will be made to secure the presence of other staff, and these staff may act as assistants and/or witnesses
- as soon as it is safe, the Restrictive Physical Intervention will be relaxed to allow the pupil to regain self-control
- a distinction will be maintained between the use of a one-off intervention which is appropriate to a particular circumstance, and the using of it repeatedly as a regular feature of school policy or an Individual Education/Behaviour Plan
- escalation will be avoided, especially if it would make the overall situation more destructive and unmanageable
- the age, understanding, and competence of the individual pupil will always be taken into account
- in developing Individual Education/Behaviour Plans, consideration will be given to approaches appropriate to each pupil's circumstance

procedures are in place, through the pastoral system of the school, for supporting and debriefing pupils and staff after every incident of Restrictive Physical Intervention, as it is essential to safeguard the emotional well-being of all involved at these times

Acceptable forms of intervention in school

There are occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with pupils for a variety of reasons, for example:

- to comfort a pupil in distress (so long as this is appropriate to their age) - to gently direct a pupil
- for curricular reasons (for example in PE, Drama etc)
- in an emergency to avert danger to the pupil or pupils
- in rare circumstances, when Restrictive Physical Intervention is warranted

In all situations where physical contact between staff and pupils takes place, staff must consider the following:

- the pupil's age and level of understanding
- the pupil's individual characteristics and history
- the location where the contact takes place (it should not take place in private without others present)

[*Schools may wish to add their own paragraph here, appropriate to their own situation.]

Physical contact is never made as a punishment. All forms of corporal punishment are prohibited. Physical contact will not be made with the participants neck, breasts, abdomen, genital area, other sensitive body parts, or to put pressure on joints. It will not become a habit between a member of staff and a particular pupil.

Elevated levels of risk are associated with:

- holding someone who is lying on the floor or forcing them onto the floor
- any procedure which restricts breathing or impedes the airways

6. Developing a positive handling plan in school

If a pupil is identified for whom it is felt that Restrictive Physical Intervention is likely, then a Positive Handling Plan will be completed. This Plan will help the pupil and staff to avoid difficult situations through understanding the factors that influence the behaviour and identifying the early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours that may be developing.

The plan will include:

- Any medical conditions or known injuries which the child has which could preclude the use of certain physical interventions or inform a team about decisions they make during an incident.
- involving parents/carers and pupils to ensure they are clear about what specific action the school may take, when and why
- a risk assessment to ensure staff and others act reasonably, consider the risks, and learn from what happens
- a record needs to be kept in school of risk reduction options that have been examined and discounted, as well as those used
- managing the pupil, strategies to de-escalate a conflict, and stating at which point a Restrictive Physical Intervention is to be used
- identifying key staff who know exactly what is expected. It is best that these staff are well known to the pupil
- ensuring a system to summon additional support

- identifying training needs

[*A school may also need to take medical advice about the safest way to hold a child with specific medical needs.]

Guidance and training for staff

Guidance and training is essential in this area. We need to adopt the best possible practice. In school this is arranged at a number of levels including:

- awareness for governors, staff and parents
- behaviour management for all staff
- managing conflict in challenging situations - all staff
- specific training on Restrictive Physical Intervention techniques - relevant staff

8. Complaints

It is intended that by adopting this policy and keeping parents and governors informed we could avoid the need for complaints. All disputes that arise about the use of force by a member of staff will be dealt with according to Surrey's Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.

9. Physical Intervention :: Procedures for Planned Interventions

1 The person responsible for authorising staff to use restrictive physical intervention as part of a structured and planned intervention within this school is (insert name).

2 The person responsible for ensuring that all planned use of restrictive physical intervention is risk assessed is (insert name).

3 Copies of all risk assessments are held (state where) and are reviewed after every use of force and termly.

4 As of (insert date), the people who are authorised to use reasonable force in planned restrictive physical interventions are listed here. No other person should engage in a planned intervention.

List individual names

or

Generic job titles

(Ensure details are reviewed / updated regularly)

5 Only those trained in appropriate techniques within the last twelve months may be authorised. The person responsible for ensuring that appropriate training is provided, including regular updates, is (insert name).

6 Training records are held (state where).

7 Those not involved in risk assessment but whose roles include the supervision of children may use reasonable force in an emergency unplanned intervention where it is necessary to prevent a serious injury from occurring.

8 Every use of restrictive physical intervention is to be reported the same day to the Head teacher or the deputy in charge if the Head teacher is off- site. The Head teacher or deputy will ensure that a parent of the child who has had force used against them is notified that day. (The school may want to add the method of doing this).

9 In addition, the details of each use of physical intervention must be recorded on the Pupil Incident Report Form that is held (state where.) The person leading the planned or unplanned intervention must complete this form. The head teacher will review every use of physical intervention.

Additional Issues for schools to address

- 1 Which staff other than teachers will be authorised to use Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) in your school?
- 2 By what process will staff be elected and authorised to use RPI in your school?
- 3 In what situations would the school consider it appropriate for teachers and other authorised school staff to use RPI?
- 4 What kind of actions would be viewed as using restrictive physical intervention in your school?
- 5 What kind of actions involving use of physical intervention would be viewed as unwarranted, excessive or punitive in your school?
- 6 What course of action will be taken in the event of staff failing to comply with this policy?
- 7 How will the school involve parents and others who know the young person in the process of developing individual behaviour management plans?
- 8 What process is to be used to agree and ratify individual behaviour management plans for use in school?
- 9 How will individual behaviour management plans be recorded?
- 10 What action does the school intend to take to assess and manage the risks presented by pupils?
- 11 What actions will the school take to assess techniques and methods for implementing planned use of physical intervention?
- 12 What kinds of unforeseen or emergency situations might staff find themselves in within your school? What techniques will the school acknowledge for use in these situations? How would such incidents be reported?
- 13 Who will provide staff and pupils with support after incidents?
- 14 Who will check for injuries, provide first aid and arrange for medical aid?
- 15 Who will report injuries to HSE?
- 16 How are incidents to be reported, recorded and notified?
- 17 How will the school monitor and evaluate the use of restrictive physical intervention?
- 18 How will incident monitoring inform risk assessment and management?
- 19 How will complaints be investigated and by whom?

Individual child or young person risk assessment

A plan for assessing and managing foreseeable risks for children or young people who are likely to need Restrictive Physical Intervention

PART A

School:

Name of Child:

Class group:

Name of teacher:

Name of parents/Carers:

Name of Support Service Member/s:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Identification of Risk

Describe the foreseeable risk (i.e. what specific behaviours have occurred)

Is the risk potential or actual? (i.e. has this happened before)

List who is affected by the risk

Assessment of Risk

In which situations does the risk occur?

How likely it is that the risk will arise? (i.e. how often has it happened before)

If the risk arises, who is likely to be injured or hurt?

What kinds of injuries or harm are likely to occur?

How serious are the adverse outcomes?

Assessment completed by:

Signature: Date:.....

PART B

Agreed Risk Management Plan and School Risk Management Strategy

Focus of Measures

Measures to be employed

Level of risk

Proactive interventions to prevent risks:

Early interventions to manage risks:

Reactive interventions to respond to adverse outcomes:

Agreed by:

(Parent/carer)

(Child - if appropriate)

(Head teacher)

(Class teacher)

(Support Service Member/s).....

Date:

Communication of Plan and School Risk Management Strategy

Plans and strategies shared with:

Communication Method:

Date Actioned:

Staff Training Issues

Identified training needs

Training provided to meet needs

Date training completed

PART C

Evaluation of Plan and School Risk Management Strategy

Measures set out

Effectiveness in supporting the child

Impact on risk

Proactive interventions to prevent risks

Early interventions to manage risks

Reactive interventions to respond to adverse outcomes

ACTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Plans and strategies evaluated by:

Title:Date:

Pupil Incident Report Form

PART A (to be completed for all incidents involving unruly or unacceptable behaviour by pupils)

Name of School:

Pupil name:

Staff name and status:

Incident date/time/place:

Nature of incident

(tick boxes as appropriate)

Vandalism

Physical control

Bullying

Absconding

Assault

Substance abuse

Diversion

Non-compliance

Isolation

Serious disruption

Time out

Other (please state)

ANTECEDENTS: (events leading up to incident)

BEHAVIOUR: (how did the pupil respond, describe what actually happened)

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CONSEQUENCES: (how did the staff intervene, how did the child respond, and how was the situation resolved)

NAMES OF THOSE INVOLVED: (staff and pupils)

NAMES OF WITNESSES: (staff and pupils)

SIGNATURE OF REPORT COMPILER:

PART B (to be completed if the use of restrictive physical intervention has occurred)

WHAT DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES WERE USED PRIOR TO PHYSICAL CONTROLS:

(tick the appropriate box below)

Defusing Deflection Distraction

Appropriate Humour Proximity control Verbal advice/support

Rule reminder Planned ignoring Time out offer

Time out directed Changes of task Choices Limits

Consequences Another member of staff Other (please state)

JUSTIFICATION FOR USE OF PHYSICAL CONTROLS:

To prevent/interrupt;

- A criminal offence
- Injury to pupil/staff/others
- Serious damage to property
- Disruptive behaviour
- Pupil absconding
- Other (please state)_____

NATURE OF RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION USED:

(Insert language relevant to training received and include estimate of duration of use of physical intervention)

Standing

Sitting

Kneeling

Floor (Prone)

Floor (Supine)

RESPONSE AND VIEW OF THE PUPIL: (this field must be completed)

DETAILS OF ANY RESULTING INJURY:

(injury to whom and action taken as a result, e.g. first aid, medical treatment)

ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION:

NAME OF SENIOR PERSON NOTIFIED:

TIME/DATE

HEADTEACHER'S COMMENTS:

SIGNATURE OF HEADTEACHER:

DATE: