

West Haddon Endowed C of E School

Physical Intervention Policy



‘Where Happiness Promotes Success’

OUR SCHOOL VISION

To ensure every child leaves our school with an outstanding education and the values and character to live life in its fullness, contributing positively to society.

Jesus said: I have come in order that you might have life-and life in all its fullness. John 10:10

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West Haddon School is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for pupils' safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, and use physical intervention only as a last resort. If used at all it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil, and be reasonable and proportional to the circumstances of the incident. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff.

It is recognised in both statute and common law that there is a need to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to pupils, staff and property.

This policy is based on The Department for Education guidance 'Use of Reasonable Force Advice for Head Teachers, staff and property.'

Objectives

The key objectives of this policy are to:

- Maintain the safety of pupils, staff and visitors
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent serious breaches of school discipline

Deciding if the use of restrictive physical intervention is appropriate

Staff will view physical intervention of pupils as a last resort. If pupils are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every effort will be made to manage behaviour positively to prevent the need for restrictive physical intervention.

In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate:

- Where a pupil is self-harming
- Where there is a risk to the safety of pupils, staff, or visitors
- Where there is a risk of serious damage to property
- Where a pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to maintenance of good order and discipline
- Where a pupil is committing a criminal offence.

Restrictive physical interventions can be employed to achieve a number of different outcomes:

- To break away or disengage from dangerous or harmful physical contact initiated by a pupil

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- To separate the pupil from a 'trigger', for example, removing one pupil who responds to another with physical aggression
- To protect a pupil from a dangerous situation - for example, the hazards of a busy road.

The vast majority of physical interventions will be part of a planned response but there may be occasions when it is unplanned. A planned intervention is one in which staff employ, where necessary, pre-arranged strategies and methods which are based upon a risk assessment, Positive Handling Plans and are recorded following the procedures as outlined in this policy. An unplanned response occurs in response to unforeseen events.

Any member of staff who undertakes a restrictive physical intervention should be clear as to why it is necessary and be able to show that it was in the pupil's best interest and that it was reasonable and proportionate. For those pupils who are assessed at being at risk of restrictive physical intervention Positive Handling Plans will be developed. These plans outline what restrictive techniques should, at best be used in association to the perceived threat, along with previously determined de-escalation strategies based on a sound knowledge of the pupil.

The judgement on whether to use physical intervention and what physical intervention should be used should always depend on the circumstances of each case and in the case of pupils with SEN, information about the individual concerned.

Staff need to make the clearest possible judgements about:

- a) The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if force is not used. The greater the potential for injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
- b) The chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired result by other means, the more likely it is that force can be justified.
- c) The relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.

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Staff should also be aware of guidance which states school staff have a legal power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action when it is used to:

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or a visit
- Prevent a pupil from leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or stop a fight in the playground
- Restrain a child at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

The school does not use force as a punishment - it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Using Physical Interventions

- Before using restrictive physical intervention staff should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil to stop misbehaving and communicate in a calm and measured manner throughout the incident. The member of staff will, where practicable, implement the school Behaviour Policy by the implementation of a range of strategies and interventions before using a physical intervention. Should a restrictive physical intervention be absolutely necessary then staff should make it clear to the pupil that physical restraint will be for the minimal amount of time and will stop, as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

West Haddon School wishes to model best practice by considering physical intervention in consideration with other relevant policies in school, specifically those policies involving behaviour, anti-bullying and health and safety.

The restrictive physical interventions authorised by the school are those techniques in which members of staff have received training and development through 'Team Teach'.

The core principles of 'Team Teach' include:

- Minimum of two staff involved
- Last resort minimum force and time

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- Techniques that do not rely on pain or locks and allow for verbal communication
- Staff safety and protection addressed
- Planned responses and techniques are written out and included in positive handling plans for individual pupils.

Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff is justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the principle of seeking to use the minimum intervention required to achieve the desired result.)

Alternatives to Physical Intervention

A member of staff who chooses not to make a physical intervention can still take effective action to reduce risk. They can:

- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation and reason.
- Give clear directions for the pupil to stop.
- Remind them about rules and likely outcomes.
- Remove an audience or take vulnerable pupils to a safer place.
- Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons.
- Use Positive Touch as shown on Team Teach training to guide or escort pupils to somewhere less pressurised.
- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help.

Staff will understand the importance of listening to and respecting children to create an environment that is calm and supportive especially when dealing with pupils who may have emotional and behavioural needs which may increase their aggression. All staff will understand the importance of responding to the feelings of the pupil which lie beneath the behaviour as well as to the behaviour itself.

Reducing the Likelihood of Situations Arising where Physical Intervention may be required

All physical interventions at the school will be conducted with a framework of positive behaviour management. The Behaviour Policy rewards effort and application, and encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. It also outlines the steps the school undertakes to ensure a calm,

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orderly and supportive school climate which minimises the risk and threat of violence of any kind, thereby reducing the need for physical intervention. A structured approach to staff development is adopted through the 'Team Teach' programme and other Professional Development opportunities, which allow staff to develop the skills of positive behaviour management and de-escalating incidents.

Staff should recognise the need to effectively manage individual incidents. It is important to communicate calmly with the pupil, using non-threatening verbal communication and body language which is likely to reduce the risk of escalation. Staff should offer positive choices to ensure that the pupil can see a way out of the situation.

Wherever practicable a pupil should be warned that physical intervention may have to be used before applying it.

Authorisation of Staff to Use Physical Intervention and Staff Development

As stated in The Department for Education guidance 'Use of Reasonable Force Advice for Head Teachers, staff and Governing Bodies 2012', all members of staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.

West Haddon School believes in ensuring that staff are trained in specific physical interventions and de-escalation strategies through the 'Team Teach' approach. Once staff have received their full training, refresher training will take place every 2 years.

The names of staff that have been trained to use physical intervention techniques along with the dates they received their training are kept centrally by the Head Teacher.

Positive Handling Plans

Individual pupils assessed at being at greatest risk of requiring physical intervention will be identified through the member of staff with responsibility for Positive Behaviour Plans (the SENCo). These pupils will be placed on Positive Behaviour Plans developed in consultation with staff, parents/carers and when possible the pupil.

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Positive Handling Plans set out the situations that may provoke difficult behaviour, preventative strategies and the de-escalation strategies that are most effective. Specific strategies and techniques that have been agreed by staff when physical intervention is required are also included.

Positive Handling Plans

- Should inform risk assessments where necessary and alert people to the risks.
- Should warn against strategies which have been ineffective in the past.
- Should include preferred strategies and suggest ideas for the future
- Should bring together contributions from key partners working in partnership and signed by all concerned.
- Should be reviewed regularly and especially following restraint incidents.

Recording and Reporting Incidents

All incidents that result in non-routine interventions will be recorded in detail. Contemporaneous notes will be made by the member of staff involved in the original incident. The school keeps a record of all physical interventions in 'The Bound and Numbered' Incident Book. This is located in the Head Teacher's Office. All records must be kept for 10 years after the date of the incident. They should be completed after everyone has recovered, state briefly exactly what happened, be signed and dated, be monitored and evaluated, inform behavioural risk assessments and positive handling plans.

The purpose of recording is to ensure that policy guidelines are followed, to inform parents/carers, to inform future planning as part of the school improvement process, to prevent misunderstanding or misconceptions of the incident and to provide a record for any future enquiry.

Accounts of the incident should be taken from the member of staff who undertook the physical intervention, the pupil involved where possible and any third party witnesses.

Parents/Carers will be informed of the school's policy regarding physical intervention in the following ways:

- Staff who work with particular children who have learning or physical disabilities (and who have IEPs, Individual Behaviour Plans or Pastoral Support Plans) may need to use specific techniques routinely to help

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manage behaviour. These will be discussed with parents/carers when necessary.

- All parents/carers will be informed after a non-routine incident where physical intervention is used with a child as soon as possible after any recordable incident. Parents/carers will be informed when and where the incident took place, which members of staff were directly involved (anonymised where necessary), why they decided physical intervention had to be used, whether there were any injuries and what follow-up action is being used in relation to their child. Parents/carers will also be given a copy of the policy.

The Head Teacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity that a physical intervention has taken place. The Head teacher will initiate the recording process and review each incident.

Governors will be informed of the number of physical interventions on an termly basis within the Headteacher report.

Post-Incident Support

The school recognises the need to ensure that staff and pupils have appropriate emotional support.

The pupil and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. Immediate action will be taken to provide first aid for any injuries requiring attention.

The pupil will be given time to become calm whilst staff continue to supervise. When it is deemed that the pupil is composed a member of staff will discuss the incident with the child. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish a positive relationship between the pupil and the member of staff involved in the incident.

All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident. A senior member of staff will provide support to the member of staff involved.

Parents/carers will be engaged in discussing the incident and for setting out subsequent actions and support.

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Complaints Procedure

If a parent/carer or pupil is concerned about any aspect of the management of an incident requiring physical intervention, the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors (in the case of the concern being raised about the Head Teacher) should be informed of their concern. The incident will be responded to in accordance with the school's complaints procedure.

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