

Policy on the use of Physical Intervention to Control or Restrain Pupils

Rationale

Documentation upon which this policy is based:

- Health and Safety at Work Acts (1974,1992, 1998)
- Section 550A of the Education Act 1998 (Circular 10/98)
- The Human Rights Act (1998)
- Children's Act (2004)
- DOH/DFES Joint Guidance on Physical Intervention (July 2002)
- Rochdale LEA Policy on the Use of Physical Restraint
- The ethos, principle and guidance of TEAM TEACH (accredited by the British Institute of Learning Difficulties)
- Other associated school policies e.g. Behaviour

The behavioural challenges presented by a small number of students mean that some form of physical intervention may be unavoidable. This policy offers a purpose, the principles and guidelines with regard to physical intervention and the circumstances in which it should take place.

Behaviour management at Sir Tom Finney Community High School is based upon the ethos and principles of TEAM TEACH (TT) endorsed by the Local Authority and accredited by the British Institute of Learning Difficulties.

TT is a holistic approach of flexible and effective support for children who may display aggressive, violent or challenging behaviour. It has a philosophical basis centred on ensuring a safe and secure environment for all those within it. It emphasises a spectrum of graded and gradual responses to reduce the likelihood of behaviours escalating to an extreme situation. It advocates the use of preventative measures, defusion and de-escalation for 95% of situations. TT also allows for training and development in the use of physical intervention using positive handling techniques that range from the least intrusive to most restrictive. TT emphasises that physical intervention through positive handling is used as a last resort.

Purpose

To clarify to all staff, students, parents, other professionals and the rest of the school community what is acceptable and what is not in terms of the use of physical intervention to control or restrain individuals.

To ensure the right of all students, staff, volunteers and visitors to be protected from harm, violence and assault within a safe and secure environment.

To compliment other policies and guidance associated with Behaviour and Discipline.

To ensure adequate training for staff and good communication with students, parents and others within the school community enabling the policy to be followed within the prescribed guidelines.

Definitions

Physical Intervention: ‘involves the use of force to control a person’s behaviour and can be employed using bodily contact, mechanical devices or changes to the persons environment’ (DOH/DFES July 2002). It can be proactive or reactive. Planned or unplanned.

Reasonable Force: There is no legal definition of reasonable force; however there are considerations to be applied that determine if the use of force was reasonable.

- The degree of force employed is in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and seriousness of the behaviour and is the minimum to achieve the desired result.
- The degree of force used is appropriate for the age, understanding and sex of the individual.
- Applied in appropriate situations – to prevent injury to themselves or others; to prevent the act of committing a crime; to prevent causing damage to property; to prevent any engagement in behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere on any authorised out of school activity or during other parts of the school day e.g. breaktime and lunchtime.

Seclusion: involves forcing an individual to spend time alone against their will and requires recourse to the law other than in emergency situations. Some pupils/students prefer to be left alone to calm. They must be unobtrusively monitored.

Time out: involves removal from a rewarding environment to another environment.

Withdrawal: involves helping an individual or moving an individual away from a difficult situation and staying with them until they have calmed down or recovered. Withdrawal exists to remove an unsettled pupil/student from a situation (preferably before the behaviour escalates). The aim is to provide both the pupil/student and staff the opportunity to calm down and think the situation through. The pupil/student may be moved to a corner of the classroom if they are not likely to disrupt further (time-out). Alternatively they may be moved outside the classroom to a safe area, where they can be observed to ensure they do not harm themselves. A separate room is only used when it is in the best interest of the pupil (behaviour support or safe space). Withdrawal from a lesson should be within an agreed time limit and not generally for whole lessons.

It is an offence to lock any individual in a room other than in an emergency as a temporary measure whilst seeking assistance and should be for the shortest possible period (holding a door closed can be equated to ‘locking’ in the eyes of the law)

Guidance

Authorisation

Only staff who have been trained are authorised to use TEAM TEACH methods of positive handling, however all staff should follow the underlying principles of TEAM TEACH. Unauthorised staff should have explained to them what steps to follow should they witness an incident of positive handling.

The Headteacher will keep a register of authorised persons by name. This list can be added to as others undergo training or names can be removed for specific reasons for example medical reasons (illness or injury), pregnancy etc. It is up to individuals to inform the Headteacher if they need to be removed from the register for any period of time.

Authorised staff should undergo 'refresher' training at regular intervals which will be determined in consultation with SLT. The school has a number of people trained as Intermediate Instructors of TEAM TEACH so can organise in-house training as required.

Staff should not:-

Touch or hold an individual in such a way that might be considered indecent
Hold around the neck or collar or any other way that might restrict breathing
Slap, punch or kick
Twist or force limbs against joints
Trip on purpose
Hold or pull by the hair or ear
Hold face down on the ground

Always remember a C.A.L.M. approach:-

Communicate – Awareness and assessment – Listen and look – Make safe

Graded and Gradual Response - (adapted from C. Sweeney, Holyport Manor School)

Increasingly restrictive physical interventions

physically interposing between students	blocking an individuals path	holding	leading guiding escorting
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LAST RESORT
***POSITIVE HANDLING AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION**

planned ignoring	time or space	diversion	c.a.l.m. body language
positive reminders	positive praise	choices	de-escalation and diffusion

TOOLS – available

curriculum	physical environment
planning	rules/rewards/consequences

PREPARATION – to add structure

fairness	flexibility	trust	humour	respect
relationships	communication	expectations	teamwork	consistency

FOUNDATIONS - on which to build



Risk Assessment

A disruptive pupil/student may be placed in isolation away from other pupils/students for a period when it is in their or the other pupil's/student's best interests. The health and safety of the pupils/students and staff and any requirements in relation to safeguarding and pupil/student welfare must be maintained. Pupils/students should be in isolation for no longer than is necessary and the time spent there must be as constructive as possible.

In the case of an unplanned, emergency intervention that requires positive handling an immediate personal risk assessment can be made at the time. This will compare the risks associated with intervention against the risk of not intervening.

A risk assessment should be undertaken before planned interventions used as a strategy. A positive handling plan will be put in place by the student's/pupil's form tutor for staff working with the student/pupil to refer to. School should also be aware of any medical issues relating to individuals and it is appropriate to consult with parents during the risk assessment process.

Recording and reporting

Minor incidents should be recorded through the school's behaviour monitoring system. Any incident in which 'increasingly restrictive physical intervention' has been used should be reported to the Headteacher, Deputy Heads or Assistant Heads as soon as is practically possible and followed up within 24 hours with a written report using the LA Incident Record Form (RF1 HELD IN THE OFFICE). All staff involved should produce a written report, crucial in case of complaints, and kept in a confidential 'Serious Incident File'. A separate record of an incident should be kept in a bound log book and cross referenced to the form.

If a pupil/student uses a Safe Space, for therapy or to calm, their time spent there must be recorded by completing the Safe Space Monitoring forms.

Any incident that results in injuries should be recorded and reported using the appropriate Accident and Dangerous Incident form (PMS102) and the accident book located in school office.

If a member of staff suffers a physical injury or stress related injury that is major or leads to an absence of three days or more then the Health and Safety Executive under 'RIDDOR' procedures must be informed.

Should a member of staff want to report an incident of assault to the police then the Headteacher will notify the LA immediately as there could potentially be a formal investigation.

All records of incidents must be retained for a minimum of 25 years.

Debriefing

Following an incident it is essential that all concerned staff, students and witnesses have chance to discuss and reflect upon an incident and their subsequent feelings. Time will be given for this to take place usually with a senior staff member.

Monitoring

The Headteacher will ensure that a member of staff is identified to monitor and evaluate all incidents of physical intervention. This will give an overview of the current situation and allow planning for future needs to be better informed.

Parents/carers and students

A summary of the school policy will be included in the school handbook that is given to parents and will include reference to Team Teach.

Should positive physical intervention be part of a student's behaviour plan this will be discussed in detail with parents/carers.

The parents/carers of any individual involved in a serious incident that warranted restrictive physical intervention will be informed as soon as possible by the Headteacher or senior member of staff. They will be given the opportunity to discuss the incident and issues relating to it further.

Within the framework of this and related policies, through curriculum opportunities and pastoral work students will be made aware of the whole school approach advocated in this policy.

Complaints

All allegations and complaints of an inappropriate use of physical intervention will be investigated openly and thoroughly in accordance with the school's complaint procedures. The LA must be notified should an investigation take place.

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