

Robert Miles Junior School

Physical Intervention Policy

Introduction:

As a primary school in the UK, we recognize the importance of maintaining a safe and secure environment for all students, staff, and visitors. To ensure this, we have developed a Physical Intervention Policy, which outlines our approach to managing challenging behaviour that may require physical intervention.

Scope:

This policy applies to all staff members working in the school, including teachers, teaching assistants, and support staff.

Objectives:

The objectives of this policy are to:

- promote a safe and secure environment for all students, staff, and visitors;
- prevent and manage incidents of challenging behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- minimize the use of physical intervention and ensure that it is only used as a last resort;
- ensure that physical intervention is used in a way that is proportionate and necessary to manage the situation;
- ensure that all staff members are trained and competent in using physical intervention techniques safely and appropriately.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this policy, physical intervention is defined as the use of physical force to prevent or restrain a student from causing harm to themselves or others, or from damaging property.

Policy:

1. **Prevention and De-escalation:** Our first priority is to prevent and de-escalate challenging behaviour. Staff members should use positive behaviour management strategies to prevent challenging behaviour from occurring in the first place, and de-escalate situations that may lead to challenging behaviour.
2. **Risk Assessment:** when a child is exhibiting behaviours they lead school to suspect physical intervention may be needed, the SENCO must conduct a risk assessment to evaluate the level of risk to the student, other students, and staff members. The assessment should take into account the student's age, size, physical and mental health, and any medical conditions.
3. **Proportionality:** Physical intervention should only be used when it is proportionate and necessary to manage the situation. Staff members should use the minimum amount of force necessary to prevent harm.
4. **Techniques:** Staff members should use the following physical intervention techniques:

- Passive physical intervention: using the body to create a barrier to prevent a student from causing harm;
- Active physical intervention: physically guiding or leading a student away from a dangerous situation;
- Restrictive physical intervention: physically holding or restraining a student to prevent them from causing harm.

Restrictive physical intervention should only be used as a last resort, and only for as long as necessary to manage the situation. Staff members must not use any physical intervention technique that could cause harm to the student, such as pressure points or physical punishment.

5. Documentation and Review: All incidents of physical intervention must be documented in writing, including the reason for the intervention, the technique used, and any injuries sustained. The incident should be reported to the student's parents or guardians as soon as possible. A debriefing session should be held with all staff members involved to review the incident and identify any opportunities for improvement.
6. Training: All staff members who may be required to use physical intervention must receive training on the policy and physical intervention techniques. The training should cover risk assessment, de-escalation techniques, and physical intervention techniques. Refresher training should be provided at regular intervals to ensure that staff members maintain their competence.

Deciding Whether to Use Reasonable Force:

Under English law, members of staff are empowered to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from or stop them continuing:

- committing any offence;
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or,
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

All members of staff will make decisions about when, how and why to use reasonable force. To help staff in making decisions about using reasonable force the following considerations may be useful:

- whether the consequences of not intervening would have seriously endangered the wellbeing of a person;
- whether the consequences of not intervening would have caused serious and significant damage to property;
- whether the chance of achieving the desired outcome in a non-physical way was low;
- the age, size, gender, developmental maturity of the persons involved.

Staff are also expected to remember that physical intervention is only one option and for behaviours involving extreme levels of risk it may be more appropriate to gain support from other agencies, including the police.

Staff will be kept informed and have a duty to inform others about the plans around specific pupils who can present risks to themselves and others. This may include information about SEN, personal circumstance and temporary upset.

Conclusion:

This Physical Intervention Policy is designed to ensure that all staff members are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to prevent and manage challenging behaviour effectively and safely. By following this policy, we can create a safe and secure environment for all students, staff, and visitors.

Policy adopted: Spring 2023

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