



Physical Intervention Policy

Version 1:0

Date Released: January 2022

Date to be reviewed: January 2023

Approved by:

Date:

Introduction

The Management Committee and Leadership of the school recognise the serious implications for all concerned when the use of physical intervention becomes necessary. In particular they acknowledge the stress and very real anxiety that such actions can and do generate in children and young people, parents and staff. The production of this policy and guidance will ensure everyone has a positive and safe way to respond to the use of physical intervention and that pupil's rights and dignity are maintained. In line with best practice, the school is consistently **proactive** - rather than reactive - in planning to support children so that the need for physical intervention is minimised wherever possible and, where it is unavoidable, that it is carried out as safely and effectively as possible with **minimum force and duration**. Following a physical intervention the school offers a structure and process to ensure the health and safety of all, along with a chance to reflect on practice and modify/adapt it as necessary. Likewise, staff take every opportunity to work restoratively with a child afterwards to help them learn from a negative incident and to plan for better ways of responding in the future.

Any member of staff may exercise their Duty of Care and use physical intervention in an emergency if it is in the **best interests** of the service-user (pupil) and that the chosen response is **necessary, reasonable and proportionate** to the assessed level of risk at that time. Training includes a focus on the knowledge, understanding and skills to de-escalate, divert, distract or otherwise 'positively handle' children and situations so that physical intervention remains a last resort.

This policy has been formulated to ensure that children and young people, parents/carers, staff, the Education and Libraries Directorate and other agencies are fully aware of the context for the school's response to behaviour that requires physical intervention. Further still it is designed to provide detailed guidance for all concerned regarding the use of escorting, holding and restraint, including when it is appropriate to physically intervene and what strategies must be used in doing so.

Training

Given the needs of the pupils at The Sallygate School, the use of safe and humane physical intervention - including escorting, holding and restraint – is a core element of the training provided for staff at the time of their induction and regularly thereafter.

Key Aspects

- Clear and unequivocal emphasis on the rights of children to be kept safe at all times
- Physical intervention should only be used when all else has been tried and the situation is likely to become dangerous for children and staff
- Staff need to keep themselves safe at all times
- Staff also need to consider the suitability of their clothes & jewellery
- Staff numbers: minimum of 2 involved (unless immediate risk overrides)
- Seeking help: a professional expectation and strength → "Help protocol & Help Script"
- Understanding of the value of enhanced communication skills and team work through the role of "critical friends" & involvement of key individuals and services
- Emphasis on caring, protecting and enhancing positive relationships

- All significant incidents should be followed up by a positive listening and learning process
- Past experiences of children will affect the way they respond to physical interventions. Those with a history of physical or sexual abuse can sometimes have painful and disturbing memories triggered by such interventions
- Children with the above experiences could also experience adverse reactions to witnessing physical interventions
- All actions must be conducted in the context of the school's policy
- Clear and accurate records of the antecedents, behaviour and consequences must be maintained.

Context

The Sallygate school is a lively and thriving community dedicated to the provision of high quality teaching and pastoral care for pupils with a range needs and difficulties who are unable to maintain a mainstream school place. It is in this light that pupils and their parents/carers will be appropriately involved in formulating any plans that are made to meet their individual needs. Such plans where appropriate will also detail how specific behaviours will be managed and the use of holding and restraint will be detailed as an integral element of the plan.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the schools stated aims and objectives as well as the Positive Relationships (Behaviour) Policy based on the principles of Restorative Approaches.

The policy has been constructed in the context of the DfE amendment to section 550A of the Education Act 1996/Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 (contained for reference purposes on the back page of the Positive Handling Plan pro forma - ANNEX 1) and the LA Policy. The policy is also written in the context of the recently revised DfE guidance document 'Use of reasonable force – Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 13 - ANNEX 4).

Principles

It is recognised that good behaviour must be acknowledged and celebrated as a matter of course and that, this in itself, is a primary tool in managing behaviour. This positive approach and associated strategies form the basis of our Positive Relationship (Behaviour) Policy and, indeed, the very ethos of The Sallygate School. Additionally, the management of behaviour at The Sallygate School is based on the belief that children and young people have the right to learn from their experiences of life. This will at times involve them testing the clearly defined boundaries established by the behaviour management system used in the school.

All staff must take a positive approach to improving pupils' behaviour and self-esteem, taking every opportunity to find out why a pupil behaves as they do, explore factors that influence a pupil's behaviour and to identify early warning signs to prevent escalation.

A fundamental issue to be considered in the use of any form of physical contact with a child or young person is their absolute right to be both "touched" and "not touched". Non-verbal interventions are a very powerful part of the behavioural dialogue. A hand on the shoulder, a pat on the back, a smile, can convey to a child that you recognise him/her as an individual and that you care about him/her. A brief non-verbal message offered fairly frequently when a child is behaving well can keep a child on task and send a very positive signal.

It is clear that for some young people who may have had experiences of abuse in the past the issue of being touched in any way must be managed sensitively. Similarly for some young people their need for emotional support and comfort may at times extend to being physically comforted and this too must be managed appropriately. In the light of these examples the judgements that all adults must make before touching any young person are as follows:

- Is the physical contact truly in the best interests of the child?
- How do I feel about this level of contact? How will this intervention affect my relationship with the child?
- Is this age appropriate given my knowledge of the young person?
- What would be the consequence of not making physical contact?

Wherever possible strategies for physical contact / intervention should be detailed within a plan formulated with the young person and shared with parents/carers and other interested parties (Positive Handling Plan – ANNEX 1). The actions might then be properly reviewed.

It is the responsibility of everyone at The Sallygate School to ensure that the environment is calm and safe for all. Young people have the responsibility to recognise when their behaviour is likely to compromise this situation and to have due regard for the comfort, safety and well - being of all within the school community. Carers must be encouraged to support the school in the provision of a safe calm and happy community by discussing with their young people the need to be sensitive to the needs of others in the school. Our Home-School Contract is one way that this is achieved especially as it sets clear expectations for both carers and the school from the point of admission. In addition, our Code of Conduct and class behaviour norms make our community values explicit. Staff also frequently refer to shared core values, rights and responsibilities when discussing incidents, expectations and consequences with carers.

Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be implemented and maintained through:

- The recruitment and selection of staff which will be governed by the principles enshrined in the Warner report “Choosing With Care”
- As a minimum, the selection process will ensure that references are sought and obtained from the most recent employer; in line with standard practice, appropriate checks are conducted prior to the employee having substantial unsupervised access to children through the Disclosure and Barring Service and Employer Access Facility; likewise, interview techniques go beyond the standard formal interview and include opportunities for candidates to engage in focused debates designed to provide insights to their individual values and beliefs
- The provision to every member of staff and Governor a copy of the policy document.
- Induction of all new staff will ensure that there is an opportunity for detailed study and discussion of the policy with senior staff and ongoing discussion within the staff group
- Managers have in place systems to identify individual and group training needs; ensure a consistent interpretation of policy and practice; support the formulation of personal development plans
- Regular training activities both in-house and, where necessary, through

reinforcement by external trainers/specialists

The implementation of this policy is monitored on a daily basis by the Headteacher. A dedicated member of the Management Committee scrutinises data generated by the on-line recording system and works with key staff to identify and address issues arising. The efficacy of the policy is evaluated in relation to its impact on individual needs, health and safety, and the good order of the school at least termly by the Head Teacher and Management Committee.

Definitions

For the purposes of this document the terms holding, escorting and restraint will be defined by the outcome which is intended when the physical intervention is applied.

- **Escorting** – the intention to move a child away from a particular area; the degree of force will determine when this becomes a restraint i.e. when the child has no choice but to move under the directions of staff
- **Holding** – the intention is to keep the child in a particular place; see above for when this becomes restraint
- **Restraint** – the intention is to overpower the child because they have lost all control and are a danger to themselves and/or others or property

Holding and Escorting

These techniques are to be used to discourage and redirect from unwanted behaviours which are likely to lead to a loss of control by the young person resulting in severe disruption to the orderly environment, damage to property, damage to self and/or others.

Staff should use their judgement in using this method as to whether it is likely to lead to a full-scale restraint. Factors for consideration will be the likely reaction of the young person based on the most recent and accurate information available and the content of any plan; the environment i.e. the impact of onlookers, events immediately preceding the incident and whether the young person has been misusing alcohol or drugs.

It is important that at all times the young person is made aware of what is expected of them and that as soon as there is a genuine attempt to comply with such expectations the hold be ceased. **Always the amount of force that is used should be the minimum necessary to successfully achieve the desired outcome as defined above.** In this connection, it should be noted that Team-Teach physical responses are designed in such a way that the degree of force and control can be safely and smoothly increased or decreased as an unfolding situation requires.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint should only be used when all other strategies have been tried and found to be unsuccessful. In the first instance staff should always attempt to defuse the situation through positive handling responses as follows:

- Appropriate use of language
- Appropriate use of voice in terms of pace, volume and tone
- Adjustment of personal space and body position to ensure minimum threat to the young person and maximum safety for staff generally a sideways stance

- Facial expression, eye contact, is positive and calming
- Appropriate use of humour
- Making clear the expectations of all concerned in the incident and the likely consequences if behaviour deteriorates further
- Seeking help from other staff to defuse the situation (qv change of face)
- When restraint is used it should always be **USED WITH CARE**

U R GENTLY	Required to prevent immediate possibility of harm or damage to self, others or property
S AFE	Using only the minimum of force necessary
E FFECTIVE	Not if it will make the situation worse
D ECENT	Great care must always be taken to avoid sensitive areas of the body, the risk of cultural offence or the risk of sexual arousal
W ITNESSED	Every effort must be made to ensure the presence of another member of staff as a witness and assistant
I NDEPENDENT	Of size the method of restraint used must depend for its efficacy on the technique and not the relative sizes of staff member and young person
T IMED	The restraint should only continue for the minimum time for it to be effective
H ARMLESS	It must always be an act of care and control never punishment
C ALMING	The intention is to help the young person regain their self control, there should always be a calming dialogue to that end
A PPROPRIATE	To the circumstances, only when all else has failed, only for as long as necessary
R ECORDED	All incidents of restrictive physical intervention must be recorded using the physical intervention logbook. Parents/carers are informed within 24 hours. A named member of staff is responsible for termly analysis of physical intervention data to identify issues and inform future planning and practice.
E XPLAINED	Reasons for the restraint and resolution of the incident should be conducted with the young person as soon after the incident as will be effective, ideally involving the member(s) of staff concerned, except under extraordinary circumstances. Outcomes should be incorporated in IEP and behaviour management plans. All restraints should be discussed at the earliest opportunity by the staff concerned and a senior member of staff.

Support for Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the Sallygate community at all times. This responsibility must extend to them in the first instance.

As part of this, it is essential that staff always make a judgement quickly about the safety of using a restrictive physical intervention based on the facts of the situation confronting them (qv **dynamic risk assessment**). They should only proceed if they have determined that all else has been tried and failed, that there is likely to be serious harm to persons or property if nothing is done or that the good order of the environment will be severely and adversely disrupted and, finally, that they can apply the hold or restraint safely for the young person and themselves, considering environmental factors, risk, health, size, dress, jewellery and the safety of others. Above all, they need to be sure in their own mind that the action they take is in the **Best Interests** of the service-user and that the action is **necessary, reasonable** and **proportionate**.

In circumstances where staff judge that they are unable to use force such that it satisfies the conditions above, they should quickly send for another member of staff and in the meantime do what they can to safely contain the situation. It should be remembered that the children and young people at The Sallygate School are active members of the community and as such should be encouraged to go for help when the circumstance dictates it to be necessary.

If an incident takes place outside the school premises staff should encourage members of the public to contact the school offering them the school's contact details in the form of the business card provided.

Staff that have had to use a significant physical intervention will be offered the opportunity to discuss their feelings about the incident as soon as they are ready. It is an expectation that all staff acknowledge the importance of using a senior member of staff to discuss the issues raised for them personally by using a restrictive physical intervention. Supervision over a longer period will be offered where necessary.

The Management Committee and Leadership Team will support the actions of staff in the use of physical intervention provided that it has been conducted in the context of this policy.

The school recognises that the use of physical intervention could potentially lead to a complaint. Each use of a restrictive physical intervention will, as a matter of course, lead to the completion of a physical intervention report and an email to carers and social workers. If after these measures have been taken a carer or pupil wishes to complain, the school will investigate the complaint in accordance with DfES circular 1/95 with advice from the Safe Guarding Officer or, where necessary, co-operate fully with any externally-led investigation.

Support for Pupils

Physical intervention can be very upsetting for pupils. Pupils should be offered emotional support throughout an incident and for as long after as needed to help them get back to their emotional status quo. Staff are expected to begin rebuilding and repairing relationships as soon as possible and, likewise, to work restoratively to facilitate post-incident learning. First Aid may also be needed and this is built into the post-incident check-list. As part of the follow-up, staff will – individually and as a team - take every opportunity to develop their understanding of the child, the triggers and causes of the behaviour in question and, likewise, to explore alternative strategies, etc. for the future.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The assessment of the risk attached to physical intervention is central to this policy. All physical intervention is risk assessed. We support the child, intervene early and plan the management of behaviour. We carry a formal risk assessment based on the HSE guidance 'Five steps to risk assessment' (→ Positive Handling Plan – Annex 1).

- Pupils likely to require physical intervention must be risk assessed by relevant staff with support from Leadership Team.
- From this risk assessment a positive behaviour plan must be written and agreed with the pupil, parents/carers and/or social worker.

Reporting and Recording

- All positive behaviour plans which involve physical intervention must be reviewed on a termly basis. Each restraint should be followed by a de-briefing including the members of staff involved and a member of the SLT. At this point the efficacy of the intervention should be evaluated, and any necessary adjustments to the positive behaviour plan should be made.
- Any changes made to the Positive Handling Plan must be agreed with pupils, parents/ carers and social workers.
- All incidents involving significant restrictive physical intervention must be recorded before the end of the working day where possible.
- Leadership Team will ensure an up to date log of restrictive physical interventions using the recording system.

Emergencies

All members of staff have a Duty of Care and are permitted in the case of an emergency to intervene physically using reasonable force. They must then follow all the reporting and recording procedures detailed in this policy.

<u>Allowed</u>	<u>Not Allowed</u>
'Emergency' response – any member of staff – as long as:	
Reasonable and proportionate force is used	Attempts to inflict physical punishment/pain
This is to defuse dangerous situations, e.g. running into the road	Use of unnecessary or disproportionate force
This is to prevent a pupil committing a serious offence	Locking a pupil in a room alone and unsupervised
This is to prevent serious injury – self or others	Unauthorised holds
We are also allowed to:	
Change our environment, e.g. double and high door handles – preventing small children to exit	