
PHYSICAL INTERVENTION WITH PUPILS POLICY

Recommended by	Teaching & Learning Committee
Approved by the FGB:	6 th December 2023
Date of next review:	November 2024 or as appropriate
Responsible Officer:	J Hylton

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is based on Department for Education guidance 'Use of Reasonable Force' (DfE 2013) and Cambridgeshire County Council 'Policy and Guidance for Schools on the Effective Management of Behaviour' (CCC 2013).
- 1.2 Comberton Village College recognises that there is a need, reflected in common law, to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to its pupils, staff and property.
- 1.3 Comberton Village College is committed to ensuring that all our staff and adults with responsibility for children's safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving behaviour which may jeopardise the physical safety of the person or others or behaviour that may be illegal, damage property or disrupt learning of others, and only use physical intervention as a last resort in line with DfE and CCC advice. If used at all, it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff.
- 1.4 This policy applies to all members of school staff who have a legal power to use reasonable force when necessary and who may or may not have had direct training in ways of control or restraint (Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- 1.5 This policy will be reviewed and discussed with staff and the governing body on an annual basis.
- 1.6 The nominated member of the School Team with responsibility for advising on the implementation of this policy is Mrs Jane Hylton, Head of Cabin, in conjunction with Mr Joshua Eke, Assistant Head of Cabin and the trainer for Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking- (formally known as STEPS)

2.0 School Expectations

- 2.1 The best practice regarding physical intervention outlined below should be considered alongside other relevant policies in the school, specifically those policies involving behaviour, bullying, child protection and health and safety.
- 2.2 In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate:
- To prevent harm to self
 - To prevent harm to other children
 - To prevent harm to adults
 - To prevent damage to property
 - To prevent others missing learning due to behaviour

This judgment will take into account the circumstances of the incident. All staff should be aware that the use of physical intervention in response to a clear or developing danger of injury will always be more justifiable than the use of force to prevent damage or misbehaviour.

- 2.3 Our staff will view physical intervention or restraint of pupils as a last resort to maintaining a safe environment. If pupils are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every effort to de-escalate will be made to manage behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation and to restore a safe, secure environment, before any consideration of any physical intervention.

- 2.4 Our 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 that may increase their aggression.
- 2.5 Our staff will always try and preserve the dignity of all concerned in a physical intervention as well as to preserve their safety. (CCC 2013)
- 2.5 All our staff will understand the importance of responding to the feelings and well-being of the child, as well as to the reasons behind and the behaviour itself.

3.0 Our Practice :

- 3.1.1 Staff within school have had Team Teach training as endorsed by Cambridgeshire County Council (June 2013) and as such provide a holistic approach to behaviour involving policy, guidance, management of the environment and where possible deployment of staff. The emphasis at all times is on de-escalation, diversion and defusion of challenging situations.
- 3.1.2 Staff will gradually be introduced to the Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking programme of de-escalation as their Team Teach accreditation expires. This is an approved method of de-escalation (similar to Team Teach) which is now recognised by most schools in Cambridgeshire and adopted as their preferred method of de-escalation and if needed physical intervention approach. The emphasis is on restraint reduction and elimination through de-escalation, diversion and defusion of challenging situations
- 3.2 Staff intervening with children will seek assistance from other members of staff as early as possible, since single-handed intervention is never recommended with larger children and increases the risks of injury to both parties and to the child.
- 3.3 All staff who become aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a pupil will have responsibility to provide a presence and to offer support and assistance should this be required.
- 3.4 Where possible, staff who have not been involved in the initial confrontation leading up to an incident may be in a better position to intervene or if need be restrain the pupil if this proves necessary. Staff should support colleagues by offering to take over a de-escalation role or indeed the role of holding to minimise stress if they have had appropriate training and feel comfortable offering support in this manner.
- 3.5 A pupil's behaviour may be adversely affected by the presence of an audience. Wherever possible, the audience will be removed which may include asking a class to leave a room if there is an appropriate space for them to move to, or if this is not possible, the pupil will be removed from the audience. (Preserving the students' dignity). The pupil and member(s) of staff will withdraw, if able, to a quiet, but not completely private, place (e.g., two members of staff should be present or a door left open so that others are aware of the situation).
- 3.6 Staff will be aware of the need to tell the pupil being restrained, in a calm and gentle manner, that the reason for the intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe. Staff will explain that once he/ she calms and people are safe, he/she will be released.
- 3.7 All staff should be supported by a back-up system to enable staff to call for help in emergencies (e.g. a member of staff could ask a bystander pupil to get help from the office.) For some students a positive behaviour plan may be put in place or the school policy on 'green button' could be used

4.0 Physical Interventions which can be regarded as Reasonable in the Circumstances

- 4.1 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed (DofE 2015). Team Teach and Steps Therapeutic Thinking approaches both try to minimize ~~state~~ any physical intervention as it should be used as a last resort and should be reasonable, proportionate and necessary
- 4.2 The following approaches are regarded as reasonable, in appropriate circumstances.

- a. Standing between pupils
- b. Blocking a pupils path
- c. Guiding a student away from danger/ cause of stress/ situation
- d. In more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restraint holds, which may require specific expertise or training

5.0 Extreme Circumstances

- 5.1 **At no time is force to be used as a punishment.** When restraining students, staff should always be aware of the dangers of certain holds, and consequently **no** hold such as one that may impinge breathing should ever be used. The risk of positional asphyxia should be considered at all times.

There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force' other than no more force than is needed (CCC 2013 and DfE 2015) it will always depend on the individual circumstances of the case.

As only the minimum of restrictive physical intervention should be used to prevent injury then any physical strike (i.e. slapping kicking, tripping, punching, grabbing) must **not** be used other than in the most extreme emergency. This is when emergency action is needed to prevent the risk of **serious injury or loss of life** (e.g., to prevent a pupil running into a busy road or to stop an extremely violent assault on someone by a pupil).

6.0 Recording an Incident

- 6.1 All incidents that result in non-routine / emergency interventions will be recorded in detail.
- 6.2 Notes will be made immediately following, or as soon as possible after the incident (i.e. before the end of the day of the incident) by the staff member involved in the original incident, in a bound book provided by the County Council. This bound book to be kept for 75 years as per guidelines.
- 6.3 Notes will also be made in the same way by any other members of staff involved (i.e. as witnesses or additional providers of support). The notes will be signed and dated on the same day.
- 6.4 The notes must contain the following information:
- the name(s) of the member(s) of staff who used reasonable force
 - the name(s) of the pupil(s) involved
 - when and where the incident took place
 - names of staff and pupils who witnessed the incident
 - the reason the force was necessary
 - the progress of the incident. Include details of:
 - description of the incident
 - any predicted harm or damage if no intervention
 - any de-escalation techniques used and description
 - the pupil's response and the eventual outcome including any holds used
 - details of any injuries suffered by either staff or pupils
 - details of any medical treatment required (an accident form will be completed)
 - details of any damage to property
 - details of follow-up, including method and time of contact with the parents/carers of the pupil(s) involved
 - any other relevant details e.g., the involvement of any other agency, e.g., the Police, exclusion data, reparations, review of de-escalation plan
- 6.5 Pupil and staff witnesses may also be asked to provide a written account if appropriate.

- 6.6 These notes should be kept in the pupil's file and retained until the pupil reaches the age of 21.
- 6.7 Routine incidents of physical intervention, usually for pupils with identified needs as set out in the pupil's Individual Education Plan, Strategy Sheet, Individual Behaviour Plan, Pastoral Support Plan or De- Escalation plan will need to be recorded as follows:
- Name of pupil
 - Date
 - Name of member of staff who intervened
 - Name of any witnesses
 - Brief description of the reason for intervention
 - Brief description of action taken
 - Details of any follow-up with parents
 - First Aid Record

7.0 Monitoring use of Restrictive Physical Interventions

7.1 The use of physical intervention in our school will be monitored in order to help our staff learn from experience, promote the well being of children in our care and provide a basis for appropriate support, training and school organisation. Monitoring will help us to determine what specialist help is needed for children. Information on trends and emerging problems will be shared within our school using local procedures. Monitoring information will be reported on a regular basis to school governors by the headteacher.

7.2 Our Bound book – Physical Intervention Record Book will be available for monitoring by County Council officers and Ofsted.

8.0 Post Incident Support

- 8.1 We will ensure that the pupil and the member of staff have immediate access to first aid if needed. This must be recorded
- 8.2 We will give the pupil time to become calm while staff continue to supervise them. When the pupil regains complete composure, a senior member of our staff (or their nominee) will discuss the incident with the pupil and try to ascertain the reason for its occurrence. The pupil will be given an opportunity to explain things from their point of view. We will take all necessary steps to re-establish the relationship between the pupil and the member(s) of staff involved in the incident.
- 8.3 In cases where it is not possible to speak to the pupil on the same day as the incident occurred, we will ensure a debrief takes place as soon as possible after the pupil returns to school.
- 8.4 All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support. A senior member of our staff (or their nominee) will provide support to the member of staff involved.
- 8.5 The Headteacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity of any incidents where physical intervention or restraint has been used. The Headteacher (or their nominee) will initiate the recording process (see 6.0) and we will review each incident to ensure that any necessary lessons are learned.
- 8.6 We will inform parents/carers of any incident involving physical intervention as soon as possible after the incident and whenever practical on the day of the incident before the child arrives home.
- 8.7 Where any injury has occurred, we will complete a Health and Safety Incident Form (IRF (96) 1/99) and send it to Cambridgeshire County Council's Health & Safety Advisory Group.

9.0 Training Needs of Staff

- 9.1 At least one member of our Leadership Team will attend relevant training on physical intervention and will keep this training updated.
- 9.2 In cases where it is known that a pupil may, on occasions, require physical intervention, we will ensure that appropriate training is provided for relevant staff by accredited employee trainers provided by CAM Academy Trust.
- 9.3 Therapeutic Thinking training is the behaviour management methodology adopted by Comberton Village College as there is a primary focus on the use of de-escalation techniques but training also supplied for the 'safe' use of restrictive physical interventions (CCC 2013). This method over time is replacing previous Team Teach approaches which has a similar ethos.
- 9.4 We will ensure that all our staff receiving this training will keep it updated and renewed as prescribed by the trainers, whilst such physical interventions remain a possibility within the class / school.

10.0 Authorisation of Staff to Use Physical Intervention

- 10.1 We recognise that most of the time physical intervention will be used infrequently, that is, as a last resort to maintaining a safe and secure environment.
- 10.2 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that any member of school staff has the authority and legal power to use such force as is 'reasonable in the circumstances' (DofE 2006) this includes those people who the 'Headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit' (DofE 2015)
- 10.3.1 Dissemination of any revised information (including updated DofE and/or Cambridgeshire County Council's policies) will be included as part of the school's normal schedule of meetings.
- 10.3.2 These meetings will be open to all staff who have been trained to use physical intervention techniques.
- 10.3.3 Governors will be informed of the number of physical interventions annually

11.0 Risk Assessment

- 11.1.1 We acknowledge that some children behave in ways that make it necessary to consider the use of restrictive physical intervention as part of a behaviour management plan. All identified behaviours necessitating use of physical intervention will be formally risk assessed.
- 11.1.2 (See Appendix D and E in the County Council's 'Policy and Guidance for Schools on the Effective Management of Behaviour' (CCC 2013) for a suggested Risk Assessment Proforma)
- 11.2 The resulting risk management strategy must be compatible with the school's positive behaviour management approach and must also take into account the pupil's EHCP, Individual Education or Behaviour Plan if appropriate, if these are applicable to the pupil.
- 11.3 Techniques and methods for controlling and restraining pupils using restrictive physical interventions must be assessed to ensure they are safe, suitable and appropriate for use with a named pupil.
- 11.4 The techniques will be agreed in partnership with the pupil, his/her parents (or those with parental responsibility) and other statutory agencies working with the pupil. This is especially the case when children are looked after by the local authority, in respite care, or cared for by others with legal responsibility in order to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the use of intervention strategies both in and out of school.

The Risk Assessment should also be properly documented within pupil's records

12.0 Arrangements for Informing parents

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

- As part of their induction all parents/ carers of high needs pupils will be sent a letter outlining the school's legal obligations to maintain a safe environment and the possible use of physical intervention (as a very last resort) with pupils, along with information about obtaining a copy of the policy for their own information.
- The policy will be published on the school website
- staff who work with particular children who have learning or physical disabilities and who have Individual Education Plans, Individual Behaviour Plans and/or Pastoral Support Plans may need to use specific techniques routinely to manage challenging behaviour. Such arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers where possible in advance on an individual basis. All interventions will be routinely recorded.
- parents/ carers will be informed after a non-routine incident where physical intervention is used with their child.

13.0 Responding to Complaints

13.1 If a parent/carer or child is concerned about any aspect of the management of an incident requiring physical intervention, they should inform the Headteacher of their concern.

If the concern relates to action by the Headteacher, the parent/carer should contact the Chair of Governors and follow the normal school complaint procedures.

13.2 Sharing details of the incident and its record should enable the resolution of most complaints but if a parent remains concerned, they should contact an external agency (Police or Social Care) to provide an independent investigation of the circumstances. This will determine the necessity for further action.

"Education Staff and Child Protection: Staff Facing an Allegation of Abuse" can be downloaded from:

<http://www.lge.gov.uk/lge/core/page.do?pageld=119361>