

St Bede's School

Physical Intervention Policy (including use of restraint)

1 The Legal Framework

- 1.1 Physical intervention should be limited to emergencies and used only in the last resort.
- 1.2 Current legislation enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the Headmaster, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:
- Committing an offence
 - Causing injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including pupil itself)
 - Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.
 - Examples of situations that may require intervention are when:
 - a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil, and pupils fighting
 - a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
 - a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others
 - a pupil absconding from a class or trying to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school)
 - a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave an area
 - a pupil behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a lesson.

2 Definition of intervention at St Bede's

- 2.1 Physical intervention is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property.
- 2.2 This includes the use of restraint.

3 General policy aims

- 3.1 Staff at St Bede's recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the strategies available to secure pupil safety / well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline.
- 3.2 Our policy on intervention should therefore be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Safeguarding policies.
- 3.3 This policy also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

4 Specific aims of the intervention policy

- 4.1 To protect every person in the school community from harm
- 4.2 To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful
- 4.3 To provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations

5 Why use intervention?

- 5.1 Physical intervention should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm self or others. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.
- 5.2 It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical intervention would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the School's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.
- 5.3 Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in *loco parentis* and should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.
- 5.4 Failure to physically restrain a pupil who is subsequently injured or injures another, could lead to an accusation of negligence. Staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

6 Alternative strategies

- 6.1 There are some situations in which the need for physical intervention is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives (eg pupil is about to run across a road).
- 6.2 However, in many circumstances there are alternatives e.g. assertiveness skills such as:
 - the *broken record* in which an instruction is repeated until the pupil complies
 - use of a distracter, such as a loud whistle, to interrupt the behaviour (such as a fight) long enough for other methods of verbal control to be effective
 - withdrawal of audience e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened
 - other techniques designed to defuse the situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour (in these cases the incident can be dealt with later when emotions are no longer running high)
 - employment of other sanctions consistent with School's behaviour policy

7 Use of physical intervention

- 7.1 Physical intervention should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention or re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment.
- 7.2 Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical intervention, although there is no definition of this, as what constitutes reasonable force depends upon situation and pupil to whom it is being applied. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent behaviour should be used, in accordance with guidelines below.
- 7.3 There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a pupil's path or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary.
- 7.4 In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate - effective physical intervention should be a last resort.
- 7.5 When physical intervention becomes necessary:
 - **DO**
 - Tell the pupil what you are doing and why and use minimum force necessary
 - Involve another member of staff if possible
 - Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the intervention
 - Use simple and clear language
 - Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
 - Relax your intervention in response to the pupil's compliance

- **DON'T**
 - Act in temper or involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with pupil
 - Attempt to reason with the pupil or involve other pupils in the intervention
 - Touch the pupil in sexual areas or twist or force limbs back against a joint
 - Bend fingers, pull hair, slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil or hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around neck

8 Actions after an incident

- 8.1 Physical intervention often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after incidents, both for staff involved and the pupil.
- 8.2 A member of the Senior Management Team should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised.
- 8.3 An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and victims of the incident should be offered support, and parents informed.
- 8.4 If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural IEP, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the SENCO.
- 8.5 It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.
- 8.6 A member of the leadership team will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

9 Risk Assessments

- 9.1 If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises.
- 9.2 Such planning will address:
 - Management of the pupil
 - Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
 - Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking
 - Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate

10 Complaints

- 10.1 A clear intervention policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and dispute about use of force by staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by Police and social services department under child protection procedures.
- 10.2 It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and Directors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.