



Lings Primary School

Policy for the restrictive intervention and positive handling of pupils

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Index	Page
Rationale	3
Objectives	3
Deciding if the use of physical intervention is appropriate	3
Using physical interventions	4
Alternatives to physical intervention	5
Reducing the likelihood of situations arising where the use of physical intervention may be required	6
Authorisation of staff to use physical intervention and staff development.	6
Positive Handling Plans	6
Recording and reporting incidents	7
Search for Weapons and Prohibited items	8
Post-incident support	8
Complaint procedure	9

Rationale

Lings Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for pupils' safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour and use physical intervention only as a last resort. If used at all, it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil, and be reasonable and proportional to the circumstances of the incident. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff.

It is recognised in both statute and Common Law that there is a need to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to pupils, staff and property.

This policy is based on The Department for Education guidance 'Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies'.

Objectives

The key objectives of this policy are to:

- maintain the safety of pupils, staff and visitors
- prevent serious damage to property
- prevent serious breaches of School discipline

Deciding if the use of restrictive physical intervention is appropriate

The term Restrictive Physical Intervention describes the use of force to control a person's behaviour.

It involves the use of force to:

- Restrict movement
- Restrict mobility
- Disengage from dangerous or harmful physical contact

Staff will view the use of physical intervention of pupils as a last resort and effort will be made to manage behaviour positively to prevent the need for restrictive physical intervention.

The decision to use physical intervention will be based on a variety of criteria including:

- Following the guidance issued by the Department of Education
- Following school policy on physical intervention
- Implementation of a Positive Handling Plan
- Recording of all incidents in the Bound and Numbered book
- Staff training
- Professional judgement

In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate to control the following behaviours:

- self-harming
- injury to other children, service-users, staff or teachers
- damage to property
- an offence being committed
- any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline within the school or among any of its pupils

Any member of staff who undertakes a restrictive physical intervention should be clear as to why it is necessary and be able to show that it was in the pupil's best interest and that it was reasonable and proportionate. For those pupils assessed as being at risk of restrictive physical intervention Positive Handling Plans will be developed. These plans outline what techniques should/should not be used, along with appropriate de-escalation strategies.

Lings Primary School is aware that it has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs. The judgement on whether to use physical intervention and what type of physical intervention should be used, should always depend on the circumstances of each case and in the case of pupils with Special Educational Needs, information about the individual concerned.

Staff need to make the clearest possible judgements about the following circumstances:

- The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if force is not used. The greater the potential for injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired result by other means, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
- The relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.

Using physical interventions

Before using restrictive physical intervention staff should, be aware of the de-escalation techniques and supporting strategies and interventions outlined in the Positive Handling Plan. Staff will communicate in a calm and measured manner throughout the incident. Wherever practicable a pupil should be warned that physical intervention may have to be used before applying it. Staff should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

The types of physical intervention could include:

- a) Passive physical contact resulting from standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path.
- b) Active physical contact such as:
 - Leading a pupil by the hand or arm;
 - Ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
 - In more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive interventions, which require specific expertise and training.

The restrictive physical interventions authorised by the school are those techniques in which staff have received appropriate training and development through 'Team Teach'. School keeps an up to date record of staff who are trained in positive handling.

Team-Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the student/pupil, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of ensuring that the student/pupil remains safe.

The core principles of 'Team Teach' include:

- minimum of two staff involved.
- last resort - minimum force and time.
- techniques do not rely on pain or locks and allow for verbal communication.
- staff safety and protection are addressed.
- planned responses and techniques are written out and included in positive handling plans for individual pupils.

Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff is justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the principle of seeking to use the minimum intervention required to achieve the desired result.)

Alternatives to physical intervention

A member of staff who chooses not to make a physical intervention can still take effective action to reduce risk.

They can:

- ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help
- show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation and reason
- give clear directions to the pupils to stop
- give clear directions to guide the pupil to a safe place
- remind them about rules and likely outcomes
- remove any audience or take vulnerable pupils to a safer place
- make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which

- could be used as weapons
- use 'positive touch' to guide or escort pupils to somewhere less pressurised.

Reducing the likelihood of situations arising where physical intervention may be required

All physical interventions at the Lings Primary School are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. The School's Behaviour Policy rewards effort and application, and encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The Behaviour Policy also outlines the steps the School undertakes to ensure a calm, orderly and supportive school climate which minimises the risk and threat of violence of any kind, thereby reducing the need for physical intervention.

Lings Primary School has adopted a whole-School approach to developing social and emotional skills through 'The Zones of Regulation' along with the more individual and targeted support given by the School's Inclusion Team.

A structured approach to staff development is adopted through the 'Team Teach' programme, which allows staff to develop the skills of positive behaviour management and de-escalating incidents.

Staff should recognise the need to effectively manage individual incidents. It is important to communicate calmly with the pupil, using non-threatening verbal and body language and ensuring that the pupil can see a way out of the situation. Strategies might include, for example, going with the staff member to a quiet room, away from bystanders or other pupils, so that the staff member can listen to concerns; or being joined by a particular member of staff well known to the pupil.

Authorisation of staff to use physical intervention and staff development

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. However it will only be used when the criteria outlined in this policy has been satisfied and it was in the pupil's best interest. Furthermore, staff are clear why it is necessary and it is reasonable and proportionate.

Staff have been trained in specific physical interventions and de-escalation strategies through the 'Team Teach' approach.

Positive Handling Plans

Individual pupils assessed at being at greatest risk of requiring restrictive physical intervention will be identified by the Head Teacher/Deputy Head/Assistant Head /Inclusion Lead. These pupils will be placed on Positive Handling Plans

developed in consultation with the school, parents/carers and the pupil. They should include:

- risks assessments where necessary and alert people to risks
- warn against strategies which have been ineffective in the past
- preferred strategies and suggest ideas for the future
- bring together contributions from key partners working in partnership and signed by all concerned
- regular reviews

Positive Handling Plans set out the situations that may provoke difficult behaviour, preventative strategies and the de-escalation strategies that are most effective. Specific strategies and techniques that have been agreed by staff when physical intervention is required are also included.

Recording and reporting incidents

The School keeps a record of all physical interventions. This is kept in the Bound and Numbered Book in the Head Teacher's office. All records are kept for ten years after the date of the incident.

The Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity that a physical intervention has taken place, initiate the recording process and review the incident. Incidents involving restraint are first recorded on My Concern before being entered into the bound book.

The purpose of recording is to ensure that policy guidelines are followed, to inform parents/carers, to inform future planning as part of the school improvement process, to prevent misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the incident and to provide a record for any future enquiry.

Accounts of the incident should be taken from the member of staff who undertook the physical intervention, the pupil/s involved and any third party witnesses.

Parents/carers will be informed as soon as practicable when a significant incident requiring restrictive physical intervention has occurred. The only exception to this is where there are concerns in regard to safeguarding. Parents/carers will be telephoned before details are confirmed in writing. Parents/carers will be informed of when and where the incident took place, which members of staff were directly involved (anonymised where necessary), why they decided physical intervention had to be used, what physical intervention was used, whether there were any injuries and what follow up action was being taken in relation to their child. Parents/carers will also be given a copy of the 'Policy for the Restrictive intervention and Positive Handling of Pupils.'

The welfare of students is paramount and if for any reason school believe a student could come to harm as a consequence of a parent being notified a judgement will be made by the Head teacher to notify the Local Authority.

Records will:

- Be completed after everyone has recovered
- Contain the supportive strategies and intervention used for de-escalation
- state exactly what happened
- be signed and dated
- be monitored and evaluated
- inform positive handling plans.

Governors will be informed of the number of physical interventions on an annual basis.

Search for Weapons & Prohibited Items

Reasonable force may also be used in exercising the statutory power, introduced under section 45 of the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006 (and re-enacted by Section 242 of the ASCL Act 2009), to search pupils without their consent for weapons. Head teachers and authorised staff can use force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following prohibited items knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images, any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property. Reasonable force may be used by the searcher. Where resistance is expected school staff may judge it more appropriate to call the police or if they have one, their Safer School Partnership (SSP) Officer.

Post-incident support

The School recognises the need to ensure that staff and pupils have appropriate emotional support.

The pupil and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. Immediate action will be taken to provide first aid for any injuries requiring attention.

The pupil will be given time to become calm whilst staff continue to supervise. When it is deemed that the pupil is composed, a senior member of staff will discuss the incident with the pupil and ascertain the reason for its occurrence. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish a positive relationship between the pupil and the member of staff involved in the incident.

All members of staff involved will be allowed appropriate period of time to

debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support. A senior member of staff (or his/her nominee) will provide support to the member of staff involved.

A member of the senior team will engage parents/carers in discussing the incident and for setting out subsequent actions and support.

Complaint Procedure

If a parent/carer or pupil is concerned about any aspect of the management of an incident requiring physical intervention, the Head Teacher should be informed of their concern. The Head Teacher will respond to the complaint in accordance with School Policy and Procedure.