Hampton Court House

Physical Intervention Policy

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Physical Intervention Policy

The Physical Intervention Policy applies to Hampton Court House School and Hampton Court House Early Years (hereafter known as Hampton Court House or HCH).

Principles

1. We are committed to a positive behaviour policy which encourages children to make positive behaviour choices. We do however recognise that children sometimes do make the wrong choices. On rare occasions this may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention (using reasonable force) by staff. Our policy for physical intervention is based upon the following principles:
    a. Physical intervention should be used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed.
    b. Any physical contact should be only the minimum required.
    c. Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
    d. Incidents must be recorded on CPOMS and reported to the Principal as soon as possible.
    e. Parents will be informed of each incident.

Definitions

What is reasonable force?

2. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.

3. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

4. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.

5. As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.

6. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.

7. School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

The Legal Framework

8. Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 allows 'teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Principal who have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:
    a. causing injury to his/herself or others

b. committing an offence
c. damaging property
d. prejudicing the maintenance of good order & discipline'.

Our approach

9. At Hampton Court House we aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort in a tiny minority of situations. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and therefore this policy should be read in connection with our Behaviour Policy.

10. It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint 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.

11. 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 have a duty of care to all children in their charge. They must, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure all pupils' safety and well-being.

12. Staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

Use of Physical Restraint

13. Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of 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 punishment.

14. Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint, although there is no absolute definition of this. What constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

15. In all circumstances, alternative methods should be used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint, a last resort.

16. When physical restraint becomes necessary:

DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible, e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

DO NOT

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil
- Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment

Actions After an Incident

17. Physical restraint often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. The Principal should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.

18. If the behaviour is part of an on-going pattern, it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural PLP, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the SENDCo. This may require additional support from other services.

19. In some circumstances SPA referral or an Early Help assessment may be appropriate to help identify an additional need for a particular child.

20. It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.

21. All incidents should be recorded immediately on CPOMS under the catergory 'Physical Restraint'. Patterns of behaviour can then be identified and addressed.

22. In the event of any future complaint or allegation this record will provide essential and accurate information.

23. The record of the incident may inform individual and school risk assessments.

24. A member of the senior 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.

Risk Assessments

25. 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. Such planning will address:
    a. Strategies to be used prior to intervention
    b. Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known
    c. Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
    d. Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
    e. Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate

f. The school’s duty of care to all pupils and staff

Complaints and Allegations

26. A clear restraint 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 a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under the complaint's disciplinary or allegation management procedures.

27. It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

28. We will review this policy on a yearly basis.

Recording the Incident

When recording the incident on CPOMS, the following details must be included:

- The date, time and location of the incident
- Names of all staff involved and whether they were involved physically or as an observer
- Details of what was happening before the incident, what triggered the event, what de-escalating techniques were used prior to the use of physical intervention, why was the physical restraint deemed necessary and any other relevant information
- Details of how the child was held
- How long the child was held
- What the child’s body position was, in relation to the adult involved
- If the child has been held previously
- Confirmation that parents have been notified and their response.