

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL
PHYSICAL INTERVENTION POLICY

Reviewed by the Governors' Education Committee, Autumn 2023

Approved by the Full Governing Body, Autumn 2023

To be reviewed Autumn 2024

RATIONALE

The purpose of this policy is to protect staff and students, prevent serious damage and to avoid disruption to the smooth running of the school community.

The policy follows the legal framework and additional guidance from the Department for Education and West Berkshire Council.

Physical intervention is the use of reasonable force to control or restrain a student. This is where the force is proportional to the incident, or to the consequences it is intended to prevent.

Staff will need to exercise professional judgement in ensuring that only the minimum force necessary is used.

Restraint should last for the shortest time possible to achieve its purpose.

GUIDANCE

The Education Act 1966 forbids corporal punishment, but allows reasonable force to be used to prevent a student from:

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others, including staff and students
- a significant threat of or actual damage to property
- acting in a way that is counter to maintaining good order and smooth running of the school community.

There are also more extreme cases, such as action in self-defence or in an emergency, when it might be reasonable for someone to use a degree of force.

Teachers and support staff are able to use force if necessary, provided they have been authorised by the Headteacher to have control or charge of students. People with such authorisation might include teaching assistants, people accompanying students on visits, etc. The Headteacher will keep an up-to-date list of authorised people, through the single central register.

IMPLEMENTATION

Any form of physical contact should be avoided.

Staff should always try to deal with a situation through other strategies, before using force.

All staff should use developed strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult students, which should be used to defuse and calm the situation.

The aim is always to establish good order, and any action likely to exacerbate the situation needs to be avoided.

In a crisis situation, physical intervention can be avoided by dialogue, diversion and clear instructions.

A range of approaches relevant to gender, age level of physical development and any special educational needs, should be employed.

Training on the guidance contained within this policy will be delivered as part of the annual Safeguarding Training.

Risk Assessments

These should be undertaken when a risk is identified in the behaviour of a student.

The **School Risk Assessment Form is Appendix 1** of this policy.

The completed risk assessment will be used to identify preventative and protective measures which need to be put in place.

The risk assessment is shared with the student, staff and parents / carers in order to provide clear guidance in improving behaviour and reducing the assessed level of risk.

Acceptable intervention can take several forms:

- Physically interposing between students
- Blocking a student's path
- Holding
- Leading a student by the arm or hand
- Shepherding a student away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- Using more restrictive holds (in extreme circumstances only)

Non-acceptable physical intervention:

- Any corporal punishment
- Holding a student by the neck, by the hair or ear
- Slapping, punching or kicking a student
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping up a student
- Holding a student face down on the ground

Records of incidents (See pro-forma - Appendix 2)

Detailed and up-to-date records will be kept of any incidents where force is used. Parents / Carers will be informed of such an incident and will be given an opportunity to discuss the incident.

Records will include the following information:

- the name(s) of the student(s) and staff involved and present
- the situation which led to the incident, including when and where the incident took place and why the use of force was deemed necessary
- details of the incident, including all steps taken to diffuse the situation and resolve it without force and the nature of the force used
- the student's response
- the outcome of the incident and action taken subsequently
- a description of any injuries suffered by the student or others and/or any property damaged during the incident.
- a copy of the letter written to parents / carers informing them of the incident
- notes of any subsequent discussions should also be attached.

One copy should be placed on the file of the student concerned and a second copy sent to Mr Jon Bastable, Deputy Headteacher: Inclusion, who has the responsibility of monitoring all incidents involving physical intervention.

Further guidance on procedures relating to physical intervention can be found in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Complaints

Adherence to the policy will help to avoid complaints. However, in the event of a complaint an investigation may take place under disciplinary or safeguarding procedures, and would therefore be subject to the policies and procedures applicable in these areas.

EVALUATION

The Physical Restraint Log will be shared with the Education Committee at each meeting.

DATA PROTECTION

The School respects your right to privacy and has put in place adequate policies and safeguards to protect your information and comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018 and the School's Data Protection Policy. Full details of how we use your information can be found on the Staff Privacy Notice on the School's website. If you require more information, please contact the Data Protection Officer, Email:

DPO@stbarts.co.uk.

This policy was approved by the Full Governing Body at their meeting on 7th December, 2023.