



Physical Intervention Policy for Employees Working with Young People

Date of Policy: September 2023.

Frequency of Review: Annually.

Date of Next Review: September 2024.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Although the emphasis within this guidance is about good practice in relation to physical intervention, all staff must recognise that the approaches described will generally only be appropriate in rare circumstances and they are not a substitute for the full range of professional approaches to behaviour management and techniques which minimise or avoid confrontation.

2. Principles

- 2.1 Maintaining the personal safety of staff, young people and visitors may, on occasion, require the use of some form of physical intervention when other approaches have been tried without success. Staff should adopt one or more of the approaches described below in order to control a situation involving risk to the safety of staff or young people.
- 2.2 The judgement over which approach to adopt in any circumstances will be based on the professional experience and expertise of the member of staff concerned taking account of:
 - the duties and responsibilities relating to the approach of a reasonable parent;
 - action which is reasonable in relation to the circumstances; and
 - an approach which is appropriate for the purpose.
 - the need to ensure that physical intervention is as minimal as possible

3. Recommended approaches

3.1 *Talk and warn*

Whenever and wherever possible, situations involving potential conflict or confrontation should be talked through. Young people obviously have to be in a receptive state for this approach to be successful. Staff present will form a judgement about the suitability of this approach.

3.2 *Holding for security and to reduce anxiety where there is a potential risk of injury to him/herself or others*

There may be situations when holding defuses or pre-empts an escalation to a more violent confrontation. It is important to ensure that the use of this approach cannot be interpreted as initiating aggression.

3.3 *Intervention when a young person presents an immediate risk of injury to him/herself or others*

It will sometimes be necessary to intervene if a young person is out of control and their behaviour poses a real risk to him/herself or others. In some circumstances this may involve the combined efforts of more than one member of staff. Any member of staff using such an approach must be aware of the restraining techniques which can be used safely. There are no circumstances in which physical intervention can include striking a young person, slapping or hitting.

3.4 *Audience Control*

It will generally be helpful to remove the audience or, if this is not possible, to remove the young people in question from the audience. Under no circumstances should this result in the young person being taken into a closed room by a single member of staff. Another member of staff should be present or a door left open so that others are aware of the situation.

4. Additional advice for employees

- 4.1 In determining which approach or combination of approaches from those listed above should be followed, staff are expected to apply

professional judgement to determine the level of risk to the young person or to others, including themselves.

- 4.2 Physical intervention, when applied, should be passive in intent. Its purpose must only be to limit the young persons ability to hurt him/herself or others with minimum application of force and through the limitation of movement rather than by physical blows. As soon as it is safe to do so the intervention should be gradually eased to allow the young person to regain their self-control.
- 4.3 Whenever circumstances allow, assistance should be sought from other members of staff at an early stage, it is imperative that communication is kept via the walkie talkies. All staff aware of another member of staff in difficulty have a responsibility to provide assistance, support and a presence provided that this does not compromise other young peoples' safety or their own safety.
- 4.4 All incidents which result in physical intervention must be recorded by the member(s) of staff present. It may also be appropriate to ask any young people who were witnesses to provide a written note which should also be signed and dated. It is common practice that the care programme for young people with particular physical or learning disabilities, who routinely require control or physical intervention, are discussed in advance with parents or carers during induction, information which is then communicated to the staff team in morning briefings as required
- 4.5 None of these approaches prevent a member of staff defending him/herself if assaulted. However, all staff should understand the legal limits to self-defence, which require that only a response which is reasonable in the circumstances will be recognised as justified in any subsequent legal action. Please refer to "Use of reasonable force" https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf
- 4.6 No pregnant/recently pregnant member of staff should ever engage in physical intervention, we request that they are removed from such situations. This information also applies to those staff with medical conditions such as those relating to back complaints and requiring the assistance of walking aids.

Policies relating to this guidance include: Behaviour, Child Protection and Staff Code of Conduct