



Policy on the use of Physical Interventions

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POLICY ON THE USE OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

1. SCOPE

A physical intervention refers to the use of force to restrict or restrain movement or mobility, or the use of force to disengage or breakaway from dangerous or harmful contact initiated by a young person.

2 POLICY

- 2.1 Where ever possible staff should take a pro-active approach to the management of potentially challenging behaviour. This means that staff take appropriate early action so as to reduce the potential for challenging behaviours to escalate into a situation where a physical intervention may become necessary. It is acknowledged that physical interventions are sometimes required to minimise the risk of harm to children and young people. This policy is intended to ensure that physical interventions are used safely and appropriately.
- 2.2 Disabled children often have limited skills in using formalised verbal or written communication. This can result in them being more dependent upon non verbal communication. All behaviours can be regarded as a form of communication; a key principle being that, "behaviours can best be understood as an expression of underlying emotional distress".
- 2.3 It is an expectation that practices within our academies are characterised by positive techniques and principles. One of the implications of this belief is that controls should be based on good relationships and mutual respect between staff and young people.
- 2.4 It is acknowledged that there will be occasions when young people do not respond to the guidance or requests of staff and place themselves or others at risk. In some cases, including where a young person is behaving violently, staff must physically intervene to protect the young person, other young people, themselves or other adults.
- 2.5 All physical interventions must be consistent with current legislation and national practice guidance.
- 2.6 All physical interventions and safe disengagement techniques should be consistent with the principles and practice of Team Teach. This is a holistic approach to work with individuals who may challenge, which is designed to meet the need for individuals without them having to resort to aggression or violence. It does this by teaching staff how to engage in pro-active methods of understanding the underlying meaning of behaviour, devising appropriate positive handling plans to meet the individual needs which include the use of verbal and non verbal calming techniques wherever possible. It also provides staff with skills to support individuals during aggressive, violent and self-injurious incidents that may occur during a crisis episode.

- 2.7 Physical interventions should normally only be used as part of a positive handling plan and only undertaken by staff who have been trained in their use. Any physical intervention should only be used to prevent injury or serious damage to property and should employ the minimum reasonable force for the shortest possible period of time.
- 2.8 Positive handling plans (PHP) will be reviewed annually as part of the review of the care plans or more frequently if required. Where the PHP includes the use of a physical intervention, the PHP must be reviewed within one week of a physical intervention being used. During a review of a care plan consideration must be given to removing physical interventions from the PHP if there is no longer any need.
- 2.9 The use of unplanned or emergency physical interventions carries a higher risk of injury to staff and young people. However, the use of unplanned or emergency physical interventions may be required when young people behave in ways that have not been foreseen by a risk assessment. In these circumstances, staff responses should reflect the principles of a planned physical intervention. After any use of unplanned or emergency physical interventions, a full risk assessment or review of an existing risk assessment must be undertaken to identify whether a positive handling plan is required or an existing one needs modification.
- 2.10 It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the welfare of children and young people is paramount. Children and young people or their parents must be supported to understand the Trust Complaints Policy and to make a complaint about the use of a physical intervention if they wish to do so. It is also the responsibility of all staff to take reasonable care of themselves and others (including young people) who may be affected by their acts and omissions.
- 2.11 If there are any safeguarding concerns for a child or young person as a result of a physical intervention, the Child Protection Policy and Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board procedures must be followed.
- 2.12 The Board of Trustees is committed to providing a safe working environment for staff and will provide appropriate training, procedures and resources to enable staff to manage risk safely.
- 2.13 Relevant staff will undertake training in Team Teach. This involves attending a 12-hour two-day course or a 6 hour modular course, with active implementation of the whole package in the work setting. It also involves regular input in team meetings and regular refresher training. The level of training provided will be appropriate to their role.