



FOREST HILL SCHOOL

Physical Intervention Policy

January 2023

*Review: as required, or if a
situation occurs which
necessitates amendment*

Key document details			
Author:	Deputy HT, Behaviour & Inclusion	Approver:	Headteacher
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FOREST HILL SCHOOL is a PFI SCHOOL which is managed by Lewisham Council.

Bouygues are the appointed PFI contractor that provides both the day to day premises services and facility services.

Bouygues are responsible for ensuring that all damages to the site are repaired within a timely manner which is monitored through the monthly meetings between the Local Authority, Bouygues and the School.

The school is responsible for ensuring that there are adequate arrangements in place for dealing with violence and aggression from students, parents / carers or visitors to the site.

Responsible persons:

Forest Hill School:	Head Teacher	Michael Sullivan
	Director of Strategy & Resources	Samantha Davies
	DSL	Iain Haresign
Local Authority	Chair of Governors	Keith Knox
	H&S Governor	Zoe Camenzuli
	PFI Contract Manager	Cheryl Collins
Bouygues	Contract Manager	Martyn Brady

Introduction:

Central to this policy is the understanding that any physical intervention used by staff must be in accord with the idea of 'reasonable force' and used only as a last resort once all other strategies have been exhausted.

There is no legal definition of reasonable force. The use of force can only be regarded as reasonable if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant behaviour presented or the consequences it is intended to prevent.

It is essential that any discussion of Physical Intervention is set in the wider context of education and behaviour management: it should not be seen as an isolated technique. 95% of the time there will be no need for physical intervention and other methods can be used.

Staff implementing this policy should be aware of and have access to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022)
- Behaviour in schools – Advice for headteachers and school staff (January 2022)
- DCSF Guidance on the Use of Force (July 2013)
- The Children Act 1989

Ethos

Work with pupils is done within an atmosphere of co-operation and mutual respect.

Boundaries and behaviour expectations are clear and appropriate. (see Behaviour and Relationships Policy). Pupils and their carers and staff are aware of the system of rewards and sanctions and positive behaviour is encouraged.

The needs of the individual will be acknowledged and respected, taking into account the diversity of experience, race, culture, disability, language, community, sex and gender.

Expectations

- The school will provide a safe, positive environment.
- Pupils are encouraged to manage their own behaviour appropriately.
- If a pupil is displaying difficult and challenging behaviour, the aim is to de-escalate the situation and maintain the safety of all the staff and pupils.
- Physical intervention will only be used rarely and as a last resort.
- Parents/carers, pupils and staff will be familiarised with the situations where physical intervention might be necessary.
- Pupils for whom physical intervention has been necessary will have an individual behaviour management profile which all staff are familiar with.
- All SLT, Head of Year, and Behaviour staff are trained in the Team Teach method of positive handling.
- All incidents will be recorded on CPOMS by the member(s) of staff involved and flagged to the DSL
- Pupils will be given the opportunity to reflect on the incident either immediately afterwards or the following day. This will be recorded.
- Staff will be given the opportunity to discuss the incident and be debriefed.
- Parents/carers will be informed as necessary.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Staff should always maintain appropriate relationships with children/young people.

Physical contact can describe a range of behaviours including appropriate demonstrations of affection, staff should not be deterred from consoling and comforting a pupil in distress. Staff need to be aware of personal boundaries for themselves and the pupils.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Physical intervention should be an act of care and control, not a punishment or form of discipline.

Physical restraint is the positive application of force with the intention of overpowering the child in order to protect a child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property.

It must be emphasised that physical restraint must always be seen as the last resort.

PROHIBITED MEASURES

Staff should never take any action (physical or verbal) that is likely to cause pain or humiliation to a pupil.

- **Corporal Punishment**
Any application of force as punishment, including slapping, throwing objects, rough handling, pushing or punching is not acceptable.
- **Deprivation of Food and Drink**
Any application to force a pupil to eat foods that they dislike, or deny them food of their choice as a form of punishment.
- **Intimate Physical Searches**
Intimate physical searches of children are totally unacceptable. A search of a pupil's clothing may be necessary if staff have reasonable grounds to suspect that the student is in possession of a weapon or banned item – see Relationships and Behaviour Policy.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Physical intervention is defined as:

Any form of physical contact with the intention of containing the behaviour of a child/young person. Physical intervention includes a range of actions from an arm around a shoulder to restraint.

Physical intervention should only be used as a measure of control when there is a situation that involves:

- Risk of serious harm to the child/young person or other persons present.
- Serious damage to property is likely to occur such as breaking of glass, doors or furniture.
- Action where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline such as the turning over of furniture or uncontrolled physical behaviour.

The principles relating to the use of physical intervention may be summarised as below:

- Staff should have good grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary to prevent a child/young person from significantly injuring himself/herself or others, or causing serious damage to property.
- Staff should take steps in advance to avoid the need for physical intervention e.g. through dialogue and diversion and the pupil should be warned verbally that physical intervention would be used unless he desists.
- A dialogue should be kept up with the pupil.
- Use, whenever possible a member of staff who has an established relationship with the pupil so they can explain what they are doing and why.
- A pupil may be successfully diverted from destructive or disruptive behaviour by being led away by the hand, arm, or by an arm around the shoulder.
- Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied, physical restraint should only be attempted when there are sufficient staff.
- Every effort should be made to secure the presence of other staff before using physical intervention. These staff can act as assistants and witnesses.

- As soon as is safe the physical intervention should be gradually relaxed to allow the pupil to regain self-control.
- Physical intervention should be an act of care and control not a punishment.
- Physical intervention should not be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate risk to people or property.
- It is important that issues of age, sex, size, personal history and background and the relationship between the child/young person and the staff involved are considered wherever possible.
- There must be care about the way in which a child/young person is held to avoid any contact with intimate parts of the body.
- When physical intervention is being used a staff member of the same gender should be possible wherever possible.
- If staff are not confident about their ability to contain a particular situation or type of behaviour, consideration should be given to involving the police.
- In some cases medical advice may need to be taken about holding pupils with specific medical needs.
- The use of force is only reasonable if the circumstances of a particular incident warrant it. It is illegal to use force if the circumstances do not warrant it. The degree of force should always be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident.

RECORDING AND REPORTING OF INCIDENTS

- Staff must record all incidents of physical intervention on CPOMS and flag the incident to the DSL.
- Significant incidents must be recorded and reported in line with local procedures.

MONITORING

- Staff should be clear about the expectations for informing management, parents and reporting and recording incidents.
- The headteacher should regularly check the records to ensure that they comply with policy and procedures and to monitor trends and practices.
- The headteacher should regularly review practices and staff training needs.
- The headteacher should hold an authorisation list of all staff authorised to use physical intervention.
- All cases of physical intervention should be reported, recorded and evaluated.
- All young people involved in a physical intervention should have access to a debrief session (a discussion about strategies that the young person could use in the future) and a complaints procedure.
- This policy will be reviewed every 12 months.

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