



**SEXEY'S**  
SCHOOL

# Physical Intervention Policy

**SEPTEMBER 2022**

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SLT Lead	Phil Clackson
Policy last reviewed by	Phil Clackson
Policy Level	School

We believe that all children and young people should have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

Signed

**Helen Cullen**  
Headteacher

## **SCHOOL ETHOS AND VALUES**

Our Christian values are at the heart of the ethos of the school and through these we grow individually and as a community. The Story of the Good Samaritan underpins our 7 core values of:

- Honesty
- Forgiveness
- Empathy
- Courage
- Resilience
- Kindness
- Respect

These core values underpin our policies, procedures and the way we treat one another in our community.

### **Physical Intervention Policy**

This policy has been developed with the school's Christian values and principles, as a Church of England Academy, at its foundation.

#### **1. Rationale**

All staff at the school may sometimes have physical contact with students in their care. This may arise through student illness or injury, the need to extend sympathy and support, or, on rare occasions, the need to prevent injury or damage.

#### **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to make clear the position of the school with regards to necessary physical interventions and to safeguard the well-being of students and staff when a situation or incident requires the use of physical intervention.

Sexey's School believes that staff should work positively and confidently with children and find the least intrusive way possible to support, empower and keep children safe. The foundation of good practice in working with children should be:

- building relationships of trust and understanding
- understanding triggers and finding solutions
- if incidents do occur, defusing the situation and/or distracting the child wherever possible

Restraint is permissible. There will be times when staff feel that they need to intervene physically to keep children safe (or to keep staff safe). Nothing in this policy is intended to undermine actions of adults that we would expect from any reasonable parent to keep their child safe or to imply a 'no touch' approach. The School expects adults to be skilled and confident in finding the best ways to keep children safe; ways that promote their rights, respect their dignity and help equip them for the future.

It is the objective of Sexey's School to maintain consistent and safe practices in the use of handling, reasonable force and restraint.

### **3. Physical Intervention and the Law**

The law allows all adults who are authorised by the Headteacher to be responsible for students to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a student:

- Committing a criminal offence (or for younger children that which would be an offence)
- Causing personal injury, injury to others or damage to property
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline

Staff should not hesitate to act in these situations provided they follow this policy and the attached guidance; however, they should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience of their professional colleagues.

### **4. Definition of Terms:**

**Handling** – refers to any physical intervention applied by a member of staff where it necessary to make physical contact with a student to manage their conduct or ensure their own or others safety. Handling strategies may be restrictive or non-restrictive and include shepherding, guiding, supporting, blocking, confining, holding and, in the most extreme cases, restraining.

**Use of Reasonable Force** – is the application of appropriate and proportionate force required to achieve the required outcome from the handling strategy employed (see above) without further endangering the student, member of staff or others present at the time of physical intervention.

**Restraint** - is the positive application of force in order to actively prevent a child from causing significant injury\* to him/herself or others or seriously damaging property. \*Significant Injury would include actual or grievous bodily harm, physical or sexual abuse, risking the lives of, or injury to, themselves or others by wilful or reckless behaviour, and self- poisoning. It must be shown that on any occasion where physical restraint is used there were strong indicators that if immediate action had not been taken, significant injury would have followed.

### **5. Implementation of Physical Intervention:**

- All members of staff working with students at the school are authorised to handle, use reasonable force or restrain students if/when such physical intervention is necessary.
- No member of staff is required to employ any physical intervention strategy if they are not comfortable or confident to do so effectively.

- No member of staff should intervene physically if they have reason to believe that to do so would worsen the situation/incident that is taking place.
- In all circumstances where physical intervention is or may become required members of staff should ensure that adult assistance is requested before intervention, although it is understood that circumstances may lead to the need for intervention prior to the assistance arriving.
- Staff considering handling, use of reasonable force or restraint must provide opportunity for the student to alter their behaviour/actions before employing a physical intervention strategy and should continue to make instructions to the student and details of their intended interventions clear.
- The method of physical intervention employed must use the minimum reasonable force for the minimum length of time (additional guidance regarding what intervention is and is not appropriate is given in Appendix A).

## **6. Recording Physical Intervention**

- All incidents where staff feel that they have used force to modify behaviour or conduct should be recorded on the school system and on a Physical Intervention Recording Form (See Appendix B). It is not necessary to record every incident of contact with a child (see Section 6), but where a member of staff perceives that contact has been received at all negatively, they are advised to record the circumstances.
- Physical Intervention Recording Forms should be submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL and copied to The Assistant Head (Pastoral) and relevant Head of Year. The Headteacher will be informed of the intervention that has taken place.
- It is the responsibility of the intervening member of staff to complete the record form on the day that the intervention took place. The circumstances and nature of the physical intervention will be held on the record of the student involved.
- The DSL/DDSL will inform any necessary agencies/authorities of the physical intervention in accordance with DFE and LA guidance. The Assistant Head (Pastoral) will ensure that parents are appropriately informed.

For the safeguarding of both staff and student, an investigation of the situation/incident will be undertaken by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. An assessment will be made whether any medical treatment is necessary, and any disciplinary measures will be considered in line with the Behaviour, Rewards and Exclusions Policy. A Restorative Justice meeting to help to rebuild relationships and ensure that lessons are learned from the incident will form part of the post-incident support.

## **7. Other physical contact with students**

There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a student is proper and necessary.

Examples of where touching a student might be proper or necessary include:

- When comforting a distressed student.
- When a student is being congratulated or praised.

- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument or machinery.
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

## **8. Searching Students**

On occasions a member of staff may have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is in possession of an item or items which contravene school regulations and could potentially cause harm to the student or others. Under these circumstances The Education Act 2011 extends the power of staff to search students without their consent. **Any prohibited items found in pupils' possession will be confiscated.** These items will not be returned to pupils. We will also confiscate any item which is harmful or detrimental to school discipline. These items will be returned to pupils after discussion with senior leaders and parents, if appropriate.

Searching and screening pupils is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening, and confiscation. Searches will be conducted by two members of staff, at least one of whom will be the same sex as the student. Sexey's School does not endorse and will not undertake a physical search of any students' person.

Where necessary a student will be asked to remove his/her coat and/or blazer, empty all pockets, open their bags and in some circumstances remove their shoes and socks. Possessions and items of apparel that have been removed may then be searched by the staff present.

If undesirable items are discovered the school will use its power of confiscation to retain the offending item(s). Parents will be contacted to explain what has been found and any subsequent sanctions that have been applied. Where appropriate, parents will be invited to retrieve the offending property and asked to ensure that they are not brought to school again.

If illegal items are discovered, then the Police will be informed.

## **9. Further information**

Further guidance may be found in the DfE guidance document –

[The Use of Reasonable Force in Schools \(July 2013\)](#)

[Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools \(July 2022\)](#)

## **Appendix A:**

### **Guidance for Staff re: Handling, Use of Reasonable Force & Restraint**

#### **1. Purpose of this document**

- To provide for the safety and security of pupils in need of physical intervention.
- To clarify for staff the steps they can take if a situation requiring physical intervention arises
- To enable staff to distinguish between what intervention is and is not acceptable.
- To help ensure that any physical intervention is minimal, infrequent, recorded and that relevant authorities and parents are appropriately informed.

#### **2. The decision to employ a Physical Intervention Strategy**

You should be aware that all staff who have responsibility for a student or group of students are authorised to employ physical intervention strategies in the event they are necessary and that the law allows you to intervene in this manner.

You should however be aware that you have a choice whether to intervene physically in any given situation and that you should not do so if you are uncomfortable with the situation or not confident to deal with it effectively.

You should be aware that if you employ a physical intervention strategy, the parents of the child will be informed of your actions, the record of the intervention will be kept on the student's file and where necessary relevant authorities will be notified of the incident for your own future protection.

#### **3. In what way can you Physically Intervene?**

Any application of physical intervention must only use the **minimum force** for the **minimum time**.

There are a number of ways in which you can physically intervene, and you must choose the strategy appropriate to the situation and presenting least risk to yourself, the student and other persons.

##### **Appropriate actions include;**

**Shepherding or Guiding;** using body positioning and positive gestures to move a student away from harm. This may include the placing of a hand on the back (between the shoulder blades) and using reasonable force to actively move them from one place to another.

**Blocking or Interposing;** placing yourself between the student and their objective (e.g. exit, another student) thereby preventing the potential injury damage or prejudice to good order.

**Holding and Leading;** gripping the student appropriately (e.g. by the upper arm) to prevent them from injury, damage, etc. In cases of resistance from a student, it may be necessary to employ holding to effectively achieve shepherding and, hence you are actively leading them away.

**Restraining;** used only in the most extreme cases, restraining may require a significant amount of force in order to prevent significant injury (as described in the policy). Essentially, restraining is a more extreme version of holding, may require more than one adult and may last significantly longer than other strategies. However, the same care must be taken to restrain a student appropriately.

#### **4. In what ways must you NOT Physically Intervene?**

The purpose of physical intervention is essentially to maintain good order and ensure the safety of all individuals, therefore it is never appropriate to employ a physical intervention strategy if you are not in control of your own emotions. Physical interventions must never be employed in anger or frustration. If you find yourself angry or frustrated by the situation at hand you must step back and allow someone else to manage the issue.

It is never appropriate to use physical intervention strategies as a punishment.

Just as there are a number of acceptable intervention strategies, there are also a number of actions it is completely inappropriate to take.

##### ***Inappropriate actions include;***

**Hitting or Striking;** while it is entirely possible that in the course of an intervention (e.g. breaking up a fight) you may be hit yourself, you must not strike a student.

**Deliberately inflicting pain;** it is not okay to twist limbs or put pressure on joints (e.g. arm up a student's back), pull or hold hair, pinch or hold a student in a pain inducing way (e.g. by the ear).

**Making contact with sexually sensitive areas of the body;** where at all possible contact should be restricted to arms, shoulders and the back as previously described.

**Restricting breathing;** by holding round the throat or for a prolonged period around the chest. It is also never appropriate to sit on/straddle a student or hold them face down to the floor.

#### **5. Guidance for managing your intervention**

- a) Always give a student an opportunity to resolve the situation without use of physical intervention first.
- b) Always send for assistance from colleagues or another authorised adult; other students should never be involved in physical intervention. You may have to intervene before help arrives, but not managing this entirely on your own is safer for all concerned.
- c) Be aware of your emotions. Are you comfortable and confident to deal with this scenario without anger? If not – don't intervene.
- d) Continue to communicate with the student (and witnesses) throughout the incident even if the student doesn't respond. Be clear about what you are doing and inform the student that the intervention will cease when it is no longer necessary.

e) Apply only appropriate strategies and the minimum required force to achieve the required outcome (prevention of injury/harm, student/staff safety, restoration of good order). Release the student once this has been achieved.

f) Manage the situation calmly – even if the student responds negatively.

g) Complete a 'Physical Intervention Record Form' as soon as possible after the event.

## **6. Minimising the need for Physical Intervention**

In most circumstances Physical Intervention really should be a last resort or an emergency action. Therefore, all staff should:

- endeavour to create a calm environment which will minimise the risk of incidents where the use of physical intervention may be required.
- endeavour to teach pupils how to manage strong emotions and conflict through opportunities for SMSC and wider aspects of the school curriculum.
- quickly seek to de-escalate incidents if they do arise.
- only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force.
- be aware of any risk assessments and positive handling plans for specific individual pupils.

Further guidance may be found in the DfE guidance document – [The Use of Reasonable Force in Schools \(July 2013\)](#)

**Appendix B**

<b>Physical Intervention Recording Form</b>
Names of student/s on whom force was used by a member of staff
Date, time and location of incident
Names of staff involved (directly or as witnesses)
Details of other students involved (directly or as witnesses), including whether any of the students involved were vulnerable for SEN, disability, medical or social reasons.
Description of incident by the staff involved, including any attempts to de-escalate and warnings given that force might be used.

Reason for using force and description of force used.

Any injury suffered by staff or students and any First aid and/or medical attention required.

Follow up, including post-incident support and any disciplinary action against students

Any information about the incident shared with staff not involved and external agencies

When and how those with parental responsibility were informed about the incident and any views they have expressed

Report compiled by:

Report countersigned by:

Role

Role:

Signature

Signature

**Information passed on to: (please tick and add names if appropriate)**

**DSL/DDSL**

**Assistant Head (Pastoral)**

**Head of Year**

**Head teacher**

