



ABLE Education Policy Document

Physical Intervention Policy

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1. Introduction

While this guidance focuses on best practices regarding physical intervention, all staff must understand that the approaches outlined should generally be used only in exceptional situations. They are not intended to replace the full range of professional strategies for behaviour management or techniques aimed at avoiding or minimizing confrontation.

ABLE Education has a no restraint policy and takes the position that members of staff should avoid any form of physical intervention as far as possible. Where it is absolutely necessary, physical intervention may be applied with reasonable force according to the stipulations laid out in this policy.

2. Principles

Ensuring the safety of young people and staff may on very rare occasions require the use of physical intervention when other methods have been attempted without success. Staff should consider one or more of the approaches outlined below to manage situations where there is a risk to safety.

The decision on which approach to take will be based on the specific circumstances at the time of the incident:

- Action that is reasonable given the situation.
- An approach that is appropriate for the intended purpose.
- Ensuring that physical intervention is kept to a minimum.

3. Staff Training

Staff training will cover physical intervention, and the policies and procedures provided in this document will be shared with members of staff.

4. Recommended approaches

Talk and Warn

- Whenever possible, situations involving potential conflict or confrontation should be addressed through conversation.
- For this approach to be effective, young people must be in a receptive state. Staff will assess whether this approach is appropriate for the situation.
- A member of staff may deem intervention to be necessary when a young person presents an immediate risk of harm to themselves or others.
- Physical intervention should never involve striking, slapping, or hitting a young person under any circumstances.
- Holding may be used for safety and to reduce anxiety when there is a potential risk of harm to the individual or others.
- In some cases, holding can help de-escalate or prevent a situation from escalating into more violent behaviour.
- If a member of staff chooses to physically intervene, it needs to be in such a manner that is not perceived to provoke aggression.

Audience Control

- It is generally beneficial to remove the audience, or if that is not possible, to remove the young person involved away from the audience.
- Under no circumstances should a young person be taken into a closed room by a single staff member.

Additional Advice for Staff

- When deciding which approach or combination of approaches to use, staff are expected to apply professional judgment to assess the level of risk to the young person, others, and themselves.
- Physical intervention, when necessary, should be passive in intent. Its sole purpose is to limit the young person's ability to harm themselves or others, using minimal force and restricting movement rather than applying physical blows.
- As soon as it is safe, the intervention should be gradually reduced to allow the young person to regain self-control.
- Whenever possible, assistance should be sought from The Head of Provision early on, and communication should be maintained throughout the situation.
- All incidents involving physical intervention must be documented by the staff member involved on the Incident Report spreadsheet and the Head of Provision alerted.
- These guidelines do not prevent staff from defending themselves if assaulted. However, staff should be aware of the legal limits of self-defence, which require a response that is reasonable under the circumstances and would be considered justified in any future legal proceedings.
- For further information, please refer to the DfE's "Use of Reasonable Force" guidance (2013)¹.
- Pregnant or recently pregnant staff members should not engage in physical intervention under any circumstances, and should be removed from such situations. This also applies to staff with medical conditions, such as back issues or those who rely on walking aids.
- Relevant policies related to this guidance include the Behaviour Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, and the Parent and Student Handbook.

5. Post-incident procedures

Following any incident involving physical intervention, comprehensive details should be recorded in the Physical Intervention Evidence Log and the pupil incident report form filled accordingly.

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a819959ed915d74e6233224/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Review_ed_July_2015.pdf

Parents should be spoken to the events that surrounded the incident and communication with the commissioner established about the events. The possibility of underlying changes in the child's circumstances that may have led to the incident will need to be explored and safeguarding considerations made. Decisions will need to be made about adjustments to the manner in which the child accesses their learning and risk assessments surrounding the child revised.