



Queen Eleanor's Church of England Junior School

Policy Number: QE-CC-11

Touch and the use of Physical Intervention Policy

Introduction

- This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for Touch and the use of Physical Intervention at Queen Eleanor's C of E Junior School.
- **IT WAS DEVELOPED** in the Autumn Term 2012 through a process of consultation with all school staff.
- **IT WAS APPROVED** by the Governing Body in Autumn 2012.
- **THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED** in Autumn 2013. It be read in conjunction with the following school policies: Behaviour Policy & Anti-Bullying Policy)

Purpose of the policy

Surrey schools and educational establishments are encouraged to use this framework, and to adapt it to their own situation.

It is advised that all schools should be familiar with the Surrey Policy on Touch and the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention and associated guidance.

[<http://sccchna1.surreycc.gov.uk/sccwebsite/sccwpublications.nsf/WebLookupFileResourcesByUNID/docid39C4812CF58B14A78025767E0043CE9B?openDocument>]

The Policy is best placed within the context of the school's Behaviour Policy; it will be part of a graduated response, and needs to be agreed in consultation with staff, governors, parents/carers, and students. It also connects to, and should be consistent with, policies on Health and Safety, Child Protection and safeguarding, Equal Opportunities, Safer Working Practices, Whistleblowing and Pastoral Care.

This policy also reflects our strong Christian ethos of treating all children with the care and respect they deserve.

Introduction

At Queen Eleanor's CofE Junior School we believe that children need to be safe, know how to behave, and know that the adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. For a very small minority of children the use of restrictive physical intervention may be needed, and, on such occasions, acceptable forms of intervention will be used.

The majority of children behave well and conform to the expectations of our school. We have responsibility to operate an effective behaviour policy that encompasses preventative strategies for tackling inappropriate behaviour in relation to the whole school, each class, and individual children.

All the school staff need to feel able to manage inappropriate risk and behaviour, and to have an understanding of what and how challenging behaviours might be communicated. They need to know what the options open to them are, and they need to be free of undue worries about the risks of legal action against them if they use appropriate physical intervention. Parents need to know that their children are safe with us, and they need to be properly informed if their child is the subject of a Restrictive Physical Intervention, including the nature of the intervention, and the rationale for its use.

Definition of 'restrictive physical intervention'

The Law allows for teachers and other persons authorised by the Headteacher to use Restrictive Physical Intervention to prevent a child from doing or continuing to do any of the following: -

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property
- engaging in any behaviour that is prejudicial to maintain the good order and discipline at the school

“Restrictive Physical Intervention” is the term used by the DfE to include interventions where bodily contact using force is used. It refers to any instance in which a teacher or other adult authorised by the Headteacher has to, in specific circumstances, use “reasonable force” to control or restrain children. There is no legal definition of “reasonable force”. However, there are two relevant considerations:

- the use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of an incident warrant it
- the degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent

The definition of physical force also includes the use of mechanical devices (e.g. splints on the pupils prescribed by medical colleagues to prevent self-injury), forcible seclusion or use of locked doors (locked doors will only be used in an emergency when there is very imminent danger to the child or other children). It is important for staff to note that, although no physical contact may be made in the latter situations, this is still regarded as a Restrictive Physical Intervention.

When the use of restrictive physical interventions may be appropriate at Queen Eleanor’s CofE Junior School

Restrictive Physical Interventions will be used when all other strategies have failed, and therefore only as a last resort. However, there are other situations when physical management may be necessary, for example in a situation of clear danger or extreme urgency. Certain children may become distressed, agitated, and out of control, and need calming with a brief Restrictive Physical Intervention that is not resisted after a few seconds.

The safety and well-being of all staff and children are important considerations. Under certain conditions this duty must be an over-riding factor.

Staff who may use restrictive physical intervention at Queen Eleanor’s:

- All staff are authorised by the Headteacher to have control of children and are aware of this Policy and its implications.

We take the view that staff should not be expected to put themselves in danger, and that removing children and themselves is the right thing to do. We value staff efforts to rectify what can be very difficult situations and in which they exercise their duty of care for the children.

Planning for the use of restrictive physical interventions at Queen Eleanor’s

Staff will use the minimum force needed to restore safety and appropriate behaviour.

The principles relating to the intervention are as follows: -

- Restrictive Physical Intervention is an act of care and control, not punishment. It is never used to force compliance with staff instructions
- staff will only use it when there are very good grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary and in the child’s and/or other child’s best interests
- staff will take steps in advance to avoid the need for Restrictive Physical Intervention through dialogue and diversion and at the level of understanding of the child or young person
- only the minimum force necessary will be used to prevent severe distress, injury, or damage
- staff will be able to show that the intervention used was in keeping with the incident
- every effort will be made to secure the presence of other staff, and these staff may act as assistants and/or witnesses
- as soon as it is safe, the Restrictive Physical Intervention will be relaxed to allow the child to regain self-control
- a distinction will be maintained between the use of a one-off intervention which is appropriate to a particular circumstance, and the using of it repeatedly as a regular feature of school policy
- escalation will be avoided at all costs, especially if it would make the overall situation more destructive and unmanageable
- the age, understanding, and competence of the individual child will always be taken into account
- in developing Individual Education/Behaviour Plans, consideration will be given to approaches appropriate to each child’s circumstance

- procedures are in place, through the pastoral system of the school, for supporting and debriefing children and staff after every incident of Restrictive Physical Intervention, as it is essential to safeguard the emotional well-being of all involved at these times

Acceptable forms of intervention Queen Eleanor's School

There are occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with children for a variety of reasons, for example:

- to comfort a child in distress (so long as this is appropriate to their age)
- to gently direct a child
- for curricular reasons (for example in PE, Drama etc.)
- in an emergency to avert danger to the child or other children
- in rare circumstances, when Restrictive Physical Intervention is warranted

In all situations where physical contact between staff and children takes place, staff must consider the following:

- the child's age and level of understanding
- the child's individual characteristics and history
- the location where the contact takes place (it should not take place in private without others present)

Physical contact is never made as a punishment, or to inflict pain. All forms of corporal punishment are prohibited. Physical contact will not be made with the participants neck, breasts, abdomen, genital area, other sensitive body parts, or to put pressure on joints. It will not become a habit between a member of staff and a particular child.

Developing a positive handling plan at Queen Eleanor's School

If a child is identified for whom it is felt that Restrictive Physical Intervention is likely, then a Positive Handling Plan will be completed. This Plan will help the child and staff to avoid difficult situations through understanding the factors that influence the behaviour and identifying the early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours that may be developing.

The plan will include:

- involving parents/carers and children to ensure they are clear about what specific action the school may take, when and why
- a risk assessment to ensure staff and others act reasonably, consider the risks, and learn from what happens
- a **record** needs to be kept in school of risk reduction options that have been examined and discounted, as well as those used. All records relating to physical intervention are confidential and are kept in an appropriately secured place.
- managing the child, strategies to de-escalate a conflict, and stating at which point a Restrictive Physical Intervention is to be used
- Identifying key staff who know exactly what is expected. It is best that these staff are well known to the child
- ensuring a system to summon additional support
- identifying training needs

Guidance and training for staff

Guidance and training is essential in this area. We need to adopt the best possible practice. At Queen Eleanor's CofE Junior School this is arranged at a number of levels including:

- awareness for governors, staff and parents
- behaviour management for all staff
- managing conflict in challenging situations - all staff
- specific training on Restrictive Physical Intervention techniques - all staff

Complaints

It is intended that by adopting this policy and keeping parents and governors informed we could avoid the need for complaints. All disputes that arise about the use of force by a member of staff will be dealt with according to Surrey's Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.

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Review frequency annually

Version/Revision Number	2012/1			
Responsible Committee	Children's			
Date originated/reviewed	September 2012			
Originated by /reviewed by	RB FGB			
Approved by	FGB			
Date approved	Autumn 2012			
Date adopted by Governing Body	Autumn 2012			
Entry authorised by	SB			
Date entered into the Master record	Autumn 2012			
Changes made (Yes/No)	Yes			
Nature of changes	Complete re-write in line with Government guidance.			
Next review date	September 2013			