

Physical Intervention Policy

1. Introduction

This policy describes our approach to Physical Intervention (Use of reasonable force) at Derrymount School. The policy provides a framework for staff in working with students to support their ability to manage themselves in and around school, to develop positive relationships with other students and staff, tolerance and understanding of other people's needs and to develop positive behaviour for learning and living.

We acknowledge that for many of our pupils managing their emotional responses is extremely challenging for them. Their behaviour is often linked to their special educational needs and this requires an individual approach to managing challenges they present. Derrymount School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all its students, staff and visitors and continually monitors and reviews procedures to enable students to manage their own behaviour appropriately.

This policy is supported by and reflects Nottinghamshire County Council's policy entitled “Keeping Classrooms Safe for Learning and Teaching”.

This policy will be revised in line with the whole school policy review programme after no longer than three years.

2. Aims

The Physical Interventions Policy (Use of Reasonable Force) contributes to whole school Behaviour Management Policy and aims to;

- support students to learn in an atmosphere in which they can feel happy and secure and are enabled to enjoy and achieve.
- support staff in keeping students, staff and others safe
- inform practice and training of staff
- minimise risk
- develop self-confidence and personal interaction skills to prevent escalation of incidents
- clarify who is able to use Physical Intervention (Use of Reasonable Force) and when

3. Objectives

We take the safety of our pupils and staff very seriously. We believe that all pupils and staff have the right to be and feel safe whilst at school or on a school-run activity. This policy should be read in conjunction with our behaviour, child protection (and the broader safeguarding agenda) policies.

Our objectives in formulating this policy include:

1. Minimising the need to use Reasonable Force
2. Empower staff to act confidently, professional and effectively to keep students staff and others safe.
3. Ensuring staff are skilled in techniques and methods to support themselves and others when Physical Interventions (Use of Reasonable Force) are necessary
4. Developing attitudes which help personal and social development and positive attitudes to

- the ideas of other people, the environment and themselves.
5. Developing an understanding of cause and effect and improve practice in minimising use of Reasonable Force
 6. Assisting students to make positive choices about their behaviours and experience a positive sense of achievement.
 7. Effective support for staff and students following use of Physical Intervention (Use of Reasonable Force)
 8. Ensuring that complaints and allegations will be taken seriously and that mechanisms for this are clear and reported

4. Minimising the Need to Use Reasonable Force

As a school we are firmly committed to creating a calm and safe environment which minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require the use of reasonable force. We use the principles associated with Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) curriculum to explore and strengthen emotional responses to situations.

We will only use force as a last resort and strongly believe in de-escalating any incidents as they arise to prevent them from reaching a crisis point. Staff will be skilled in promoting and rewarding positive behaviour and will utilise various appropriate techniques in the management of a class environment to ensure everyone's rights and responsibilities are support.

Our Rights include:

- to be safe and secure from harm
- to be treated fairly and with respect.
- to be listened to and heard
- to work without interference or intimidation from others
- to be provided with adequate challenge
- to be able to enjoy their work and be happy at school.

Our Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring we treat ourselves and others with respect.
- Supporting each other to reduce negative behaviours including bullying.
- Respecting the views of other school members and to tolerate and celebrate differences
- Showing self-restraint including sorting out disagreements without fighting, intimidation or bullying
- Celebrating our successes and those of others.
- Ensure we are supported to work at a level suited to our abilities and aptitudes.
- Supporting others school members to improve.
- Supporting each other positively when things start to go wrong so they have opportunity to make the right choices.
- Ensuring appropriate actions are taken to promote positive behaviour (rewards/sanctions)
- Providing and maintaining a calm well-ordered environment in which we can all feel safe and able to focus on our work.
- Develop and use strategies that promote calm and avoid conflict.

Staff will only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved by not using force.

5. Staff Authorised to Use Reasonable Force

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act (2006) the Head Teacher of our school is empowered to authorise those members of his/her staff who are enabled to use reasonable force.

At Derrymount School the Head Teacher has empowered the following members of staff to use reasonable force:

- All teachers and any member of staff who have control or charge of pupils in a given lesson or circumstance have permanent authorisation.
- Other members of staff such as site management and administrative teams also have the power to use reasonable force if a circumstance should arise in which immediate action should be taken.

At Derrymount School we recognise that there will be times when negative behaviours will occur and it is our aim to reduce these to a minimum by ensuring all of our community know what we will not tolerate. These behaviours are clearly set out in our Behaviour Management Policy.

6. Deciding Whether to Use Reasonable Force

Under English law, members of staff are empowered to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from or stop them continuing:

- committing any offence;
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or,
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

All members of staff will make decisions about when, how and why to use reasonable force. To help staff in making decisions about using reasonable force the following considerations may be useful:

- whether the consequences of not intervening would have seriously endangered the well-being of a person;
- whether the consequences of not intervening would have caused serious and significant damage to property;
- whether the chance of achieving the desired outcome in a non-physical way was low;
- the age, size, gender, developmental maturity of the persons involved.

Staff are also expected to remember that physical intervention is only one option and for behaviours involving extreme levels of risk it may be more appropriate to gain support from other

agencies, including the police.

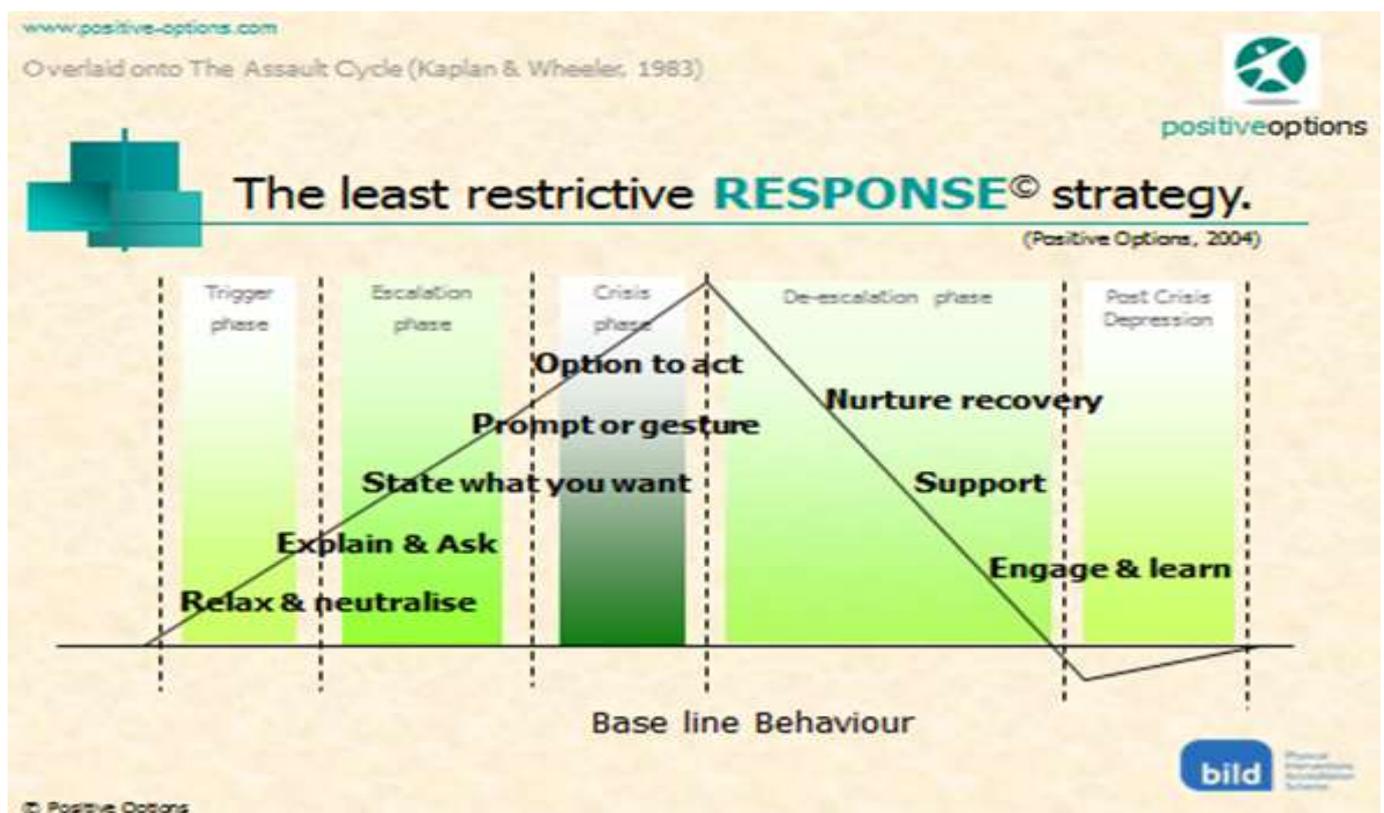
Staff will be kept informed and have a duty to inform others about the plans around specific pupils who can present risks to themselves and others. This may include information about SEN, personal circumstance and temporary upset.

7. Using Reasonable Force

Derrymount School aims to manage behaviour openly, fairly, proportionally and consistently. Rewards and sanctions are tools which can be applied on a whole school or individual basis to assist us to raise standards.

When using force members of staff should only use the minimum amount of force required in achieving the required outcome.

Staff should also use force within the context of existing good practice in non-physical skills and techniques, such as in the RESPONSE[®] Strategy:



Staff should, where possible, avoid any type of intervention that is likely to injure a pupil, unless in the most extreme of circumstance where there was no viable alternative. Also staff should avoid using force unless or until another member of staff is present to support, observe or call for assistance.

When we have to respond to unacceptable behaviour our primary goal is to stop its repetition and to develop patterns of positive behaviour. We record both positive and negative behaviours using an electronic system called Behaviour Watch and we work with the data by analysing cues and triggers to assist with developing effective strategies to promote, manage, prevent and de - escalate incidents over time.

8. Staff training - Managing Actual or Potential Aggression MAPA

Many of the students who attend Derrymount School have significant difficulties managing their emotional responses and this can result in outbursts of verbal and/or physical aggression towards staff, other students and/or the built environment. Because of this all teaching staff and some other identified staff are trained to de-escalate and where necessary physically intervene and hold students whose behaviours are dangerous and likely to result in physical harm to themselves or others. Staff who have been identified as needing training in this area, will access Physical intervention and MAPA training through the County Council co-ordinator who delivers nationally accredited courses.

These courses provide participants with an insight into recent legislation and guidance that could impact on policy and practice, as well as a range of physical and non-physical strategies to help manage the risks posed by children and young people's behaviour.

Nottinghamshire County Council has adopted the MAPA (Managing Actual and Potential Aggression) training model, and as such is an 'Approved Training Centre' for Positive Options Ltd, which is a BILD (British Institute of Learning Disability) accredited training programme.

These training programmes will be delivered to staff via whole school inset or by accessing specialist training events, details of which can be found in the physical intervention room on Nottinghamshire's virtual learning platform, Fronter <https://nottsslp.org.uk>

Staff who receive this training will be accredited to use the physical elements of MAPA for a defined period as stated on their certificate. Staff will be expected to attend a refresher course to update their skills and renew their certification every 12-15 months.

When physical interventions (MAPA) are ineffective or pose a significant risk to the student or staff it may be necessary to use a safe space to release the student into. This space has to be clear of furniture and other items that could be used by the student as weapons to hurt others or self, damage the environment or barricade themselves in. Where risks are known these should be supported via a personal behaviour management plan.

All floor hold incidents are reported to the Local Authority MAPA Co-ordinators in accordance with County policy.

In our school the Chill Out/Cool down room is available (Churchmoor Lane Site) for use if a student is very aggressive and does not respond positively to physical intervention. The ability of staff to keep the student and themselves safe during physical intervention and other contributing factors such as supervision of other students may be a consideration as to whether use of the "Chill Out/Cool down room" is appropriate.

The following policy is followed if this facility is used:

Use of the Chill Out/Cool down room

This room is for use with students whose aggressive behaviour is not safe to be managed through physical intervention or whose behaviour would be escalated by physical intervention or when staff are no longer able to safely manage physical intervention due to fatigue, injury or if the number of staff required would leave other students unsupervised and vulnerable.

- Two adults should accompany child to the Cool Down Room.
- The child should be given the chance to have the door left ajar – if they agree not to come out of the room. The door does not have a lock but a retaining bolt which stops it being kicked toward staff. The door can always be opened inwards.
- The door should only be shut if the child is angry and attempting to leave or is hitting out at the adults.
- At least one adult should be outside at the door the room when a child is inside.
- When the door is closed the adult should monitor and assess every few minutes through the vision panel, if the child is ready for the door to be opened.
- The adults should help to calm the child in ways appropriate to the child.
- The room must not be used for children to work in.
- The room must not be used as a punishment.
- Adults have no need to physically restrain a child whilst in the room unless they are self-harming
- All directed use of the room must be recorded and reported to Parents/Carers on the day of use.
- Students are able to request use of the room if they feel it will help them de-escalate their raised levels of aggression

The aim is that children spend the minimum time needed in the Chill Out/Cool Down Room to regain control of their behaviour.

Where behaviours are extremely aggressive/dangerous or where staff are unable to safely manage such behaviour without reasonable risk to themselves or others it may be necessary to use police assistance. Once police assistance is called they will then assess what necessary action needs to be taken. These incidents are rare and wherever possible we would manage situation in house with our own staff.

9. Recording and Reporting Incidents

The governing body will ensure that a procedure is in place, and is followed by staff, for recording and reporting, *significant* incidents where a member of staff has used force on a pupil. The record must be made as soon as practicable after the incident.

While ultimately only a court of law could decide what is 'significant' in a particular case, in deciding whether or not an incident must be reported, staff should take into account:

1. an incident where unreasonable use of force is used on a pupil would always be a significant incident;
2. any incident where substantial force has been used (e.g. physically pushing a pupil out of a room) would be significant;
3. the use of a restraint technique is significant;
4. an incident where a child was very distressed (though clearly not over reacting) would

be significant.

In determining whether incidents are significant, schools should consider:

- the pupil's behaviour and the level of risk presented at the time;
- the degree of force used and whether it was proportionate in relation to the behaviour;
- the effect on the pupil or member of staff.

Staff should also bear in mind the age of the child, any special education need or disability or other social factors which might be relevant.

Behaviour monitoring is an integrated part of the school evaluation and development plan. The students' behaviours are recorded on an electronic data base called Behaviour Watch and this enables us to analyse both positive and negative incidents. We look for patterns of behaviours, triggers and follow-up actions to enable us to then evaluate and adapt our strategies to improve provision for students and staff.

Sometimes an incident might not be considered significant in itself, but forms part of a pattern of repeated behaviour. In this case, although there is no legal requirement to record such incidents, schools are advised to let parents know about them.

Records are important in providing evidence of defensible decision-making in case of a subsequent complaint or investigation. Staff may find it helpful to seek the advice of a senior colleague or a representative of their trade union when compiling a report.

We use the Nottinghamshire County Council electronic health and safety recording system 'Well-Worker'. This system enables members of staff to report, using a standardised format, any significant incident where force has been used, or any incident where violence to staff has occurred or been threatened. Staff can access well worker via the Nottinghamshire County Council website.

10. Post-incident support

Following the use of physical intervention staff and pupils will be supported, the immediate physical needs of all parties will be met and staff will ensure that positive relationships are maintained.

11. Monitoring of provision

The Head Teacher is responsible for monitoring behaviour management at Derrymount School including Physical Interventions (Use of Reasonable force) and will use the following methods to evaluate the quality of the provision we provide and report effectiveness to the Governing Body:

- Behaviour Watch – data analysis
- Exclusions data
- Attendance
- Pupil, parent and staff surveys

The Link Governor for this policy is: Carol Wright.

12. Complaints and allegations

The right to complain is considered to be very important at Derrymount School. Every complaint is a matter of concern to the school and will be investigated with due urgency and thoroughness.

We will also make clear to students that they have a right, and are able, to question/complain about the use of reasonable force.

We will ensure that mechanisms are in place for pupils, parents, carers and staff to voice the opinions, comments or concerns. These include speaking to various stakeholders, in the first instance to resolve any issues or concerns they may have.

Complaints and allegations will be taken seriously and we have a staged approach to dealing with complaints. (See Complaints Policy)

13. Links to other policies.

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Equality policy
- Sexual harassment policy
- Health and safety at work policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education April 2014
- Working Together Nov 2013
- Guidelines on safe use of the Chill Out Room / Cool Down Room
- Management of Aggression and Violence to Staff Policy

This policy is to be reviewed no later than Sept 30th 2017