

## **PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS AND INTERPERSONAL CONTACT GUIDELINES POLICY**

### **1. Physical Interventions and Interpersonal Contact Guidelines Policy Statement**

- 1.1. It must be recognised that due to the nature of the learning difficulties presented by students that attend Churchward School, that the use of restrictive and non-restrictive physical interventions are an integral element of the teaching and learning process.
- 1.2. It is likely that the necessity to employ restrictive physical interventions will be greater for those students who are on the autistic spectrum and may be most likely to exhibit challenging behaviour. Staff who support these students should be experienced in employing a wide range of de-escalation strategies that can reduce the instances of challenging behaviour and therefore the need for physical intervention (see later notes on the development of positive handling plans).
- 1.3. These guidelines have been developed in response to the recommendations of Use of Reasonable Force Advice (July 2015) issued as guidance by the DfE.
- 1.4. These guidelines has also considered the implications from the following:
  - a. Department of Health (DoH) / Department for Education and Skills (DfES) guidance on Restrictive Physical Interventions (July 2002).
  - b. Guidance for Safer Working Practices (2015).
  - c. Swindon Borough Council (SBC) Policy on Positive Handling and the Use of Reasonable Force (July 2008).
- 1.5. The above must also be read in conjunction with other Churchward School and curriculum policies, primarily the following:
  - a. Behaviour Policy.
  - b. Equalities Policy.
  - c. Personal Social Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) policy and relevant appendices.

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## **DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS GUIDELINES**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. All staff at Churchward are trained in the use of 'Team Teach' – all staff are aware that physical intervention forms a very small part (5%) of the behaviour management used with the pupils. The vast majority of behaviour management is about controlling the environment, diversion techniques, finding alternate solutions, using appropriate personnel deployment and creative timetabling amongst other things. It is understood that physical intervention is seen as a last resort.
- 1.2. Non-Restrictive Physical Interventions are used (where necessary) to:
  - a. Enable students to participate in teaching sessions.
  - b. Allow students to participate as active / independent learners.
  - c. Enable students to participate in the school curriculum through the maximum use of their senses.
  - d. Ensure that the medical and physical care needs of the students are catered for.
- 1.3. Restrictive Physical Interventions such as seat belts / harnesses (for safe transportation), wheelchairs, wrist straps, straps on wedges, side lying boards and standing frames, doubled handled doors and self locking doors etc are used to ensure the safety of students in potentially dangerous situations.
- 1.4. Other methods of Restrictive Physical Intervention, which may involve the use of reasonable force, may be used to prevent:
  - a. Self-harming.
  - b. Injury to others.
  - c. Damage to property.
  - d. A criminal offence being committed.
  - e. Serious disruption to the extent that good order and discipline cannot be maintained.
- 1.5. Good personal and professional relationships between staff and students are vital to ensure good order in Churchward School.
- 1.6. It is recognised that the majority of students in Churchward School respond positively to the discipline and control practised by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all students and staff in Churchward School.

- 1.7. Positive relationships between staff and students, particularly those on the autistic spectrum, are developed over time and depend upon staff having a detailed knowledge of their students and enabling students to have a sense of trust in those adults with whom they work regularly. This means that consistency and a collegiate approach are essential in order that students, particularly those on the autistic spectrum, know what is expected of them and understand how staff will respond to them. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required.
- 1.8. These guidelines seek to ensure that staff at Churchward School clearly understands their responsibilities in taking appropriate measures where reasonable force is required. It is essential that staff are well informed and appropriately trained to deal with these difficult situations and understand fully the rationale and implications of the guidance given in the DoH / DfES **Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Staff working with Children and Adults who Display Extreme Behaviour in Association with Learning Disability and / or Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD)**.

## **2. Practical Considerations**

- 2.1. Restrictive Physical Intervention is considered as a **last resort** in Churchward School's approach to behaviour management and should be used where a student's behaviour poses a risk to the health and safety of themselves, other students and staff.
- 2.2. Reducing the triggers of challenging behaviour, seeking to defuse situations and the use of non-physical classroom / behaviour management strategies (see Behaviour Policy) are considered as imperative means of early intervention, promoting appropriate behaviour and reducing the need for restrictive measures. This is especially important for students on the autistic spectrum who may not be able to appreciate the effect of their behaviour both on themselves and others and who may need significantly more support to help to manage their own behaviour.
- 2.3. Staff should ensure that they take all possible steps to reduce the likelihood of challenging behaviour. This will require careful management of the environment to reduce excessive stimulation that may cause anxiety and to ensure that there is available space to enable students to have **time out** when necessary.
- 2.4. It is important that staff are familiar with the sensory needs of students and support the reduction of anxiety by enabling the effective management of sensory difficulties.

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- 2.5. The use of minimal language by staff and the availability of effective means of communication for students will have a positive impact on the reduction of anxiety and challenging behaviour and therefore reduce the need for physical intervention. Visual clues are extremely useful, even with students who do not usually require this, as heightened levels of anxiety reduce the ability to effectively process information.
- 2.6. It is helpful to distinguish between:
- a. Emergency or unplanned use of reasonable force that occurs in response to unforeseen events.
  - b. Planned Intervention, in which staff have identified and employed, where necessary, prearranged strategies and methods that are based upon a risk assessment, form part of a positive handling plan and are recorded in care plans / behaviour management plans.
- 2.7. Emergency or Unplanned Use of Reasonable Force:
- a. This may be necessary when a student behaves in an unexpected way. In such circumstances, staff must retain their duty of care and any response must be proportionate to the circumstances.
  - b. Staff should use the minimum force for the shortest period necessary to prevent injury and maintain safety; consistent with appropriate Team Teach training they have received.
  - c. It is essential that should an unplanned use of force have been necessary, the positive handling plan of the student be immediately reviewed and updated to take into account the potential for a similar incident occurring again.
- 2.8. Planned Interventions:
- a. Planned Interventions should be agreed and described in writing, in advance, by a multidisciplinary or school team and a risk assessment should be carried out which identifies the benefits and risks associated with the application of different intervention techniques consistent with Team Teach training.
  - b. Such interventions will form part of a student's Positive Handling Plan that will clearly state preventative strategies to be used before planned physical intervention may be necessary.
  - c. Positive Handling Plans should be a highly personalised document, available to all staff, which is used to prevent the necessity of the use of force in the first place by careful management of the environment and the use of de-escalation techniques, including the consideration of the potential sensory issues which the student may need support in managing.

- d. Positive Handling Plans should document the appropriate strategies **should** it be necessary to positively handle the student in order to prevent damage to person, property or risk of serious disruption.
- e. The Positive Handling Plan should be agreed and signed by the Lead Teacher, parents, and the Head Teacher (HT) and should be reviewed annually or as necessary throughout the year.
- f. Serious incidents can be traumatic for both staff and students involved and both must be given time, space and support to recover from an incident.
- g. It is important that where appropriate, steps are taken to repair relationships and that time is set aside to assess how a similar situation could be avoided in the future. This should involve reviewing Positive Handling Plans as well as providing opportunities for discussion between staff and students involved, where this is appropriate.
- h. Support services are provided by SBC, available to all SBC Employees, details of which can be found on the staffroom notice board or from the HT.

### **3. Use of Sanctuary Rooms / Safe Space and Breakout Areas**

- 3.1. There may be occasions where it is necessary for a student to spend time alone, either for their own wellbeing or for the wellbeing of others. On occasions students (especially those with Autistic Spectrum Disorder {ASD}) may request the use of Sanctuary rooms or Breakout areas in order to enable them to retreat from a potentially stressful situation and allow themselves time to manage their own emotions. On other occasions, where a student is at risk of harming either themselves, staff or others it may be necessary for them to spend time in Sanctuary rooms or Breakout areas until such time as they are calm.
- 3.2. These actions are perfectly legitimate providing that the following guidelines are strictly adhered to:
  - a. Students should **never** be left unsupervised in Sanctuary rooms / Safe space / Quiet rooms or Breakout areas. Staff must be able to view the student through the window **at all times**, even if this is done discretely.
  - b. If a student requests that they leave the Sanctuary / Safe space / Quiet room or Breakout area, this request should be honoured providing that there is no further risk to the student or to others.

- c. If a student does not indicate that they are ready to leave, they must be invited out at the earliest opportunity when it is deemed that they no longer present a risk to themselves or others.
- d. The potential use of Sanctuary rooms / Safe space / Quiet room or Breakout areas must be recorded on a student's Positive Handling Plan and in the Behaviour Log for the relevant incident. The use of Sanctuary rooms / Safe space / Quiet room or Breakout areas should be recorded using Behaviour Watch ([www.bwschool.co.uk](http://www.bwschool.co.uk)).
- e. When recording using Behaviour Watch, staff should provide a detailed description of the incident / student behaviour, handling staff if Team Teach was used and the Team Teach manoeuvre used to positively handle the young person to the Safe place. This should supplement the information recorded in the student incident / behaviour log.
- f. Information recorded using the Behaviour Watch system is monitored. The information gathered for Behaviour Watch will help to track patterns in student behaviour and identified actions / strategies can then be put in place which should in turn see a significant reduction in sanctuary use. The data collected for individual students will be shared with other professionals as appropriate such as with the educational psychologist, community nurses, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TaMHS) and other relevant professionals to help in identifying the best way of supporting the young person(s).
- g. All data from Behaviour Watch will also be subject to analysis; the analysis will be presented to Governors three times a year as part of the Wellbeing Report to Governors.
- h. There will also be focused intervention work as part of the analysis to reduce the use of Sanctuary rooms / Safe space / Breakout areas.

#### **4. Recording and Reporting**

- 4.1. As soon as is reasonably practicable following an incident in which physical force has been used, the member of staff will record the incident (Behaviour Watch) within 12 hours and will inform the Lead Teacher responsible for behaviour. Staff will also inform parents if an incident has taken place, either through the home schoolbook or by telephone, as appropriate.
- 4.2. In the case of physical injury occurring to the student and / or other students / staff the appropriate incident / accident forms also need to be completed. Serious incidents involving the use of Team Teach techniques / Advanced Team Teach Techniques e.g. must be Recorded.

- 4.3. Churchward School will keep an up to date record of all incidents where reasonable force has been used as part of an effective recording system that allows for incidents to be tracked and monitored (Behaviour Watch and Class logs). All parents, carers, and where appropriate, social workers will be informed as soon as possible.
- 4.4. Some students may have individual risk assessments in place as well as Positive Handling Plans in place (In particular, those who access the Learning Mentor Programme) due to the nature of their complex, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

## **5. Authorised Staff and Training**

- 5.1. In line with Local Authority (LA) guidance on physical intervention all staff at Churchward School are authorised, within the content of these guidelines to use reasonable force to control or restrain students.
- 5.2. It is the duty of the HT to ensure adequate training is provided for all authorised staff in order to operate within these guidelines. Members of staff will not be expected to undertake the use of reasonable force without knowledge of the school's policies and guidelines. New staff will be fully briefed prior to authorising their participation. Training will be regular and include clarification of the circumstances when restrictive physical interventions should be used in line with the LA recommendations to follow Team Teach practice. They are responsible for training staff in Team Teach techniques both in house and part of an outreach programme.
- 5.3. It is recognised that inevitably there will be a period of time between new staff joining the school and the opportunity for them to undertake Team Teach training arising. During this interim time, untrained staff will not be expected to engage in physical interventions with students except in an extreme emergency when the health and safety of others would be seriously put at risk by failure to do so. This is in line with Team Teach guidelines.

## **6. Summary**

- 6.1. These guidelines are designed to help students learn and practise a good standard of behaviour to promote healthy social and emotional development and positive attitudes to learning.
- 6.2. These guidelines will be shared with all parents as a student enters the school and with outside agencies as and when appropriate. All school staff will be familiarised with these guidelines upon entry to the school.

## **7. Related Documents**

- 7.1. The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy:
  - a. Health and Safety Policy.

- b. Section 3 - Guidelines for Interpersonal Contact.
- c. Team Teach documentation.
- d. Training Records.
- e. Sanctuary Logs.
- f. Incident Files.
- g. Risk Assessments.
- h. Positive Handling Plans.
- i. Child Protection Policy

## **DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT OF THE INTERPERSONAL CONTACT GUIDELINES**

### **1. Underpinning Principles**

- 1.1 These guidelines have been drawn up in order to ensure the protection of both students and staff.
- 1.2 Staff at Churchward School necessarily come into regular physical contact with students, much of which plays an integral part in the development of the student's physical, emotional and social development.
- 1.3 It is not intended that normal physical contact between staff and students be deterred, simply that staff are mindful of the purpose and consequences of that contact.
- 1.4 Many students, especially those ASD, value physical interaction as a way of communicating and interacting with others and it is important that staff feel that they are fully supported when engaging in such interaction, such as rough and tumble play or sensory activities such as deep pressure massage.
- 1.5 It should also be remembered however that we are preparing our students for adulthood and as such should be teaching them acceptable ways of interacting with others. Behaviour that may seem acceptable when students are 11 or 12 will not be so when they are 25. This should be kept in mind when engaging in physical contact with students.
- 1.6 For guidance pertaining to Physical Intervention and Manual Handling, staff should refer to the relevant separate policies.
- 1.7 If staff are unsure about any aspect of these guidelines or have a concern regarding interpersonal contact they should speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mike Grier or Lorraine Kutcha (Deputy DSL).
- 1.8 All staff have a duty of care to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is in part exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff and students and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement. These guidelines have drawn upon **DfES Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of children and Staff in Education Settings 2005**.

## 2. Student to Student Contact

- 2.1. Where an apparent problem has been identified this must be communicated to all staff associated with the student and the action required written into a Positive Handling Plan which should be shared with parents.

- 2.2. Physical contact between students is generally discouraged as being inappropriate in the school environment although contact between students to greet, congratulate or comfort when upset is acceptable.

### **3. 3. Staff Physical Contact with Students**

- 3.1. Staff will necessarily need to use hand holding or friendly holds where appropriate to escort and guide students and to ensure their safety and the safety of others in the community.
- 3.2. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings, and so far as is possible, use a level of contact that is appropriate to the child for the minimum time necessary.
- 3.3. In the summer months it is acceptable and necessary for staff to apply sun cream to students. Where possible students should be encouraged to apply it themselves but in many cases it will be necessary for staff to offer assistance. It is essential that students are offered full protection from the sun and parents will be asked to sign a permission slip to enable staff to support students in this.

### **4. Intimate Care**

- 4.1. Only adults employed by Churchward School are authorised to assist pupils with intimate care as they have undergone rigorous safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks.
- 4.2. Students and volunteers may not undertake these duties.
- 4.3. All staff will be offered appropriate training and guidance in managing intimate care, and all will have up to date Safeguarding training and cleared DBS checks.
- 4.4. Where students with physical impairments require personal care and which involves manual handling; two members of staff must be present. Staff must also have received manual handling training. Less experienced staff members must be accompanied by an experienced staff member who will lead the manual handling technique required to transfer students from wheelchair to changing bed. This will also include leading during intimate care.
- 4.5. Churchward recognises that there are students who require minimal assistance with personal care e.g. females changing sanitary wear, or students who are ambulant and need some assistance with pad changing. Taking into account aspects of dignity for these students, individual members of staff should inform another appropriate adult when they are going alone to assist a student with intimate care, and should speak to the student personally by name, explain what they are doing in a way that reflects the child's age and ability.

- 4.6. Individuals working in intimate situations with young people can feel particularly vulnerable. Where this occurs the issue will be discussed confidentially between the staff member and the Head teacher or Designated Safe Guard Lead (DSL) to consider whether alternative arrangements, additional training or guidance may be needed. Staff is within their rights to ask a second staff member to be present as in close proximity when personal care is taking place.
- 4.7. No member of staff will carry a mobile phone, iPad, iPod, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.
- 4.8. Care must be taken to ensure privacy and to retain the dignity of the student during changing.
- 4.9. Students who require a toilet training programme should have sensitive supervision, positive reinforcement and careful record keeping. The same applies for personal hygiene programmes such as showering, dealing with menstruation etc. Procedures for such care should be established in consultation with parents / carers.
- 4.10. Students should not be rushed on the toilet.
- 4.11. It is acceptable that female members of staff change female and male students.
- 4.12. Male members of staff must only change male students. It is not acceptable for them to change female students.

## **5. Residential Activities**

- 5.1. During residential activities students will not share a room with those of the opposite sex. Male staff members will not share a room with female students. It may be necessary at times for female members of staff to share a room with male students, depending on their level of need. Staff should be discreet at all times. They should wear pyjamas and seek privacy when changing. Female students should also be asked to wear pyjamas.

## **6. Child Protection**

- 6.1. The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures will always be adhered to, and all children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.
- 6.2. If a member of staff has a concern about physical changes in a student's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate designated person for child protection and complete the necessary 'cause for concern' forms.
- 6.3. If a student becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded.

Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution.

- 6.4.** If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed (see Safeguarding Procedures and Procedures for Managing Allegations against Staff). Similarly, any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or about any improper practice will report this to the Head teacher, in accordance with the Safeguarding or and Whistleblowing policy.

## **7. Policy Review**

- 7.1. This policy has been produced in consultation with staff at Churchward School and has the approval of the Governing Body (GB). A copy of this policy is available to all who request it and on the school website. The Governors will review the policy annually.

Signed ..... Headteacher

Signed ..... Chair of Governors

Date .....