





DINGLE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION POLICY

Date adopted:	30 th September 2010
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	25 th November 2025
Next review due:	Autumn 2026
Reviewed by:	Governing Body
Signed:	 (Headteacher)
Signed:	 (Chair of Governing Body)
Date:	25 th November 2025

1. Statement of intent

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils within Dingle Community Primary School. It is designed to explain the school's arrangements for care and control.

This policy has been developed in response to the recommendations of Circular 10/98 'The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils' issued following the implementation of the Education Act 1996 (Section 550A).

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in our school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our school respond positively to the discipline and control practised by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff in school. 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.

The aims of the policy are to:

- establish clarity amongst governors, staff, parents/carers and pupils as to the circumstances in which physical interventions, including restrictive physical interventions, may be appropriate;
- describe what actions staff may take when incidents occur that may require the physical restraint of a pupil;
- define the procedures that must be taken immediately after any such incident.

2. Organisation

It is the responsibility of the school Governing Board to assist the Headteacher to produce and implement a Physical Intervention Policy.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to establish and implement a Physical Intervention Policy within the school.

All staff need to be safe and confident in how they manage inappropriate behaviour. This policy seeks to ensure that staff in Dingle Community Primary School clearly understand 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 difficult situations.

Parents need to know that the potential danger faced by their children and those who are teaching them is minimised where possible. They also need to know that they will be properly informed if their child is the subject of physical intervention and they need to know the nature of the intervention and the rationale for its use.

This policy connects to and is consistent with our other policies, especially those on Behaviour Management, Health and Safety and Child Protection.

3. Circumstances in which physical intervention (restraint) may be appropriate

The policy of Dingle Community Primary School is that we always try to avoid using physical interventions and regard them as a last resort. We will utilise only the minimum force required to resolve the situation safely and the response will always have regard to the circumstances and to the age and understanding of the child.

The law allows teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Headteacher to have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility);
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing damage to property (including the pupil's own property);
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere (Education Act 1996, Section 550A).

At Dingle Community Primary School, in addition to teachers employed at the school Teaching Assistants and supply teachers are authorised by the Headteacher to have control of pupils and must be made aware of this policy and its implications.

School staff are, like anyone else, allowed to use reasonable force (the minimum necessary) to defend themselves.

We take the view that staff are not expected to put themselves in danger and that removing pupils and themselves from a source of danger is a proper thing to do. We appreciate the integrity of our staff and value their efforts to rectify situations that are difficult and in which they exercise their duty of care for their pupils. However, we do not require them to go beyond what is reasonable. In particular, it is acceptable for any member of staff to decide that they will not use restrictive physical

intervention for personal reasons. Staff should not normally use force to maintain order or to avoid damage to property unless the child's actions pose a threat to themselves or another.

4. Reasonable force

The Dudley L.A. Good Practice Guidance for Schools on The Use of Physical Interventions including Restrictive Physical Interventions advises that:

The use of force is only regarded as reasonable if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it and the degree of force must be in proportion to seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

5. Preventative strategies

All staff, pupils and governors should be aware of the school's strategies for dealing with pupils who are distressed, angry or potentially violent. Techniques for calming pupils or redirecting their outbursts should always be used prior to the use of any physical contact. General training on behaviour management is undertaken by all staff in school.

6. What actions staff should take where incidents may require physical intervention

Except in cases where there is immediate danger, staff will normally try other ways of resolving or de-escalating a situation. These will include:

- calmly re-stating the rules and expectations for the situation
- removing other pupils from the situation and thus from danger of being an audience
- use of physical proximity, but not in a threatening way
- encouraging the pupil to withdraw to a safer and calmer situation
- calling another adult for support or to take over

If more than minor physical intervention is judged to be necessary, the teacher or adult in charge should:

- send for the assistance of another adult (for support, or to take over, and as a witness)
- send for the assistance of a member of Senior Leadership (all trained in physical intervention)
- remove other pupils from the scene, if possible
- continue to talk calmly to the pupil, explaining what will happen and under what circumstances the physical intervention will cease (but not in a threatening way)
- use the minimum force necessary and cease the intervention as soon as it is judged safe
- not act punitively in any way, verbally or physically

In some circumstances, it may be considered appropriate to call the police.

7. Acceptable physical interventions

The school does not include a policy of training staff in particular physical restraint techniques as these would be inappropriate to the age and physical development of the pupils and to the type of incidents that occur in this school. Should there be the need for physical intervention, staff should send (using 'Blue Duck') for a member of Senior Leadership (trained in physical intervention).

However, in a situation where this is not possible and the member of staff physically intervenes, as an emergency and last resort, acting in loco parentis, it is vital that only acceptable forms of physical intervention are used.

Acceptable forms of physical intervention include:

- leading or guiding a pupil by the hand or arm, or shepherding them with a hand in the centre of the back
- holding a pupil who has lost control until they are calm and safe
- physically moving between and separating two pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- use of reasonable force to remove a weapon or dangerous object from a pupil's grasp
- where there is immediate risk of injury, any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of 'reasonable force', for example, to prevent a pupil running into a busy road or hitting or hurting someone
- using more restrictive holds in extreme circumstances

Unacceptable forms of physical intervention include:

- any form of corporal punishment, slapping, punching or kicking
- holding by the neck or collar, or otherwise restricting the ability to breathe

- holding by the hair or an ear
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- tripping up a pupil or holding an arm out at neck or head height to stop them
- holding a pupil face down on the ground or sitting on them
- locking a pupil in a room, except in extreme situations whilst summoning support

Staff should also avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.

(These guidelines accord with the Dudley L.A, Physical Intervention Guidance).

8. School procedures following an incident

Following a significant incident of physical intervention, when a pupil has resisted or challenged and force has been used, the teacher or adult responsible should as soon as possible inform the Headteacher (or member of the Leadership Team in the absence of the Headteacher).

A full written account of the incident will be made by the member of staff concerned, in the numbered book, with the record being retained by the Headteacher. The report will contain:

- name(s) of pupil(s) concerned, when and where the incident occurred
- names of staff or pupils who witnesses
- the reason why force was needed
- how the incident began and progressed, who said what, who did what
- what was done to calm things down
- what degree of force was used, what kind of hold, where and for how long
- pupil's response and the outcome of the incident
- details of any injury to any person or damage to property

The report must be signed and dated by the member of staff and countersigned that it has been read by the Headteacher, who will:

- discuss the incident with the pupil as soon as possible
- interview staff involved and any other witnesses
- inform the pupil's parents/carers and social worker, if relevant
- record any disagreements expressed by the pupil or adults about the event
- take any appropriate further action, liaising with L.A., governors or unions, as appropriate, and acting within the L.A.'s Child Protection Procedures

Incidents will be reported to the Chair of the Governing Body, in outline without identifying the pupil.

9. Complaints

Any disputes that arise about the use of force by a member of staff will be dealt with in accordance with the L.A. Child Protection Procedures, a copy of which is available in school. This could in some circumstances lead to an investigation by police and social services.

Complaints about this policy should be directed to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

Appendix – A

RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION – INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Student(s): _____

Year:

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Location of Incident:

Describe incident in detail:

Restraint described:

Why was restraint needed?

Was anyone injured? Yes/ No

If yes, was this recorded in the accident book? Yes/ No

Was the student checked for injuries by a member of staff who was not involved in the incident? Yes/ No. Please complete body map (attached)

Member(s) of staff involved:

Adult witnesses to restraint:

Pupil witnesses to restraint:

This incident form was completed by _____

Designation of person completing report _____

Appendix B - Risk Assessment

Name:		D.O.B.		Date:	
Triggers /Behaviours / Situations likely to result in Physical Intervention: <i>What is the behaviour like?</i> <i>When does it occur? Where does it occur?</i>					
Strategies to be used (where possible before physical intervention)					
Chill out time		Distraction		State alternatives /consequences choices/limits	Praise partial compliance
Give space		Reassure/success reminder		Other staff intervene	Repeat request
Talk calmly		Give a count		Planned ignoring	Remove stimulus
Verbal advice support		Negotiation		Contingent touch	Humour
Other strategies					
Preferred Handling Strategies to be used:					
Friendly Hold (arm around shoulder)			Shield		
Walking			Wrap		
Single Elbow			Double Elbow		
Standing			Ground		
Figure of Four			Chairs		
Other			'Get outs' that can be used when holding		
De-briefing process following incident: What care is to be provided. space, talk through etc					
Signatures Child (Where appropriate) Parent/Guardian Headteacher Date					
Review date					