

POLICY ON USE OF RESRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION (RPI)

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In schools we have become used to and skilled at defusing situations without the use of force. The DFE circular on this subject (Circular 10/98 and Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) is not intended to authorise the use of corporal punishment nor to encourage the use of inappropriate force. Staff are expected to continue to use the support mechanisms available to defuse difficult situations.

It is the policy of Cawood School that only exceptionally may physical intervention be used on a pupil by any adult working with the school, and that our policy in this regard will be made known to staff, governors and parents.

This policy allows for the physical intervention in disciplinary or dangerous situations. It does not include any form of corporal punishment and should be limited to the force necessary to prevent injury to the pupil or any other pupil or member of staff, to prevent a pupil causing damage to property or behaving in a manner which is severely disruptive of pupils' work, or to prevent a pupil committing a crime.

POLICY INTO PRACTICE

The purpose of the policy is to clarify the situation for adults working with children ("responsible adults"), to inform them what is acceptable and prevent any misunderstanding of their intentions.

It is accepted that there are situations where it is necessary to physically assist a pupil in the course of work. An example of this would be picking up a small child who has fallen and hurt themselves or a teacher assisting a pupil in PE who is doing a difficult manoeuvre. Any such actions should be done carefully to avoid any misunderstanding; even well-intentioned physical contact can be misconstrued.

The Headteacher will indicate which staff have authority to use limited physical force on pupils in situations which require it. In this school these are members of the teaching staff – teachers and teaching assistants only.

Where a pupil is recognised as likely to behave in ways which may require physical intervention, then an individual plan will be prepared on the action to be taken when it becomes necessary.

Adults must not put themselves into physical danger in any circumstances. If self-defence is necessary then the minimum force must be used. It is for the Headteacher to decide whether circumstances are such that the police should be called.

The force used must be appropriate in the sense that a "reasonable adult" would think it a proportionate or suitable response in the exceptional circumstances. It should always be the last resort, applied with the minimum degree of intrusion and be in line with training received on the use of RPI.

IN PRACTICE

Staff must:

1. Take steps in advance to avoid the need for physical intervention.
2. Have good grounds for believing the action is necessary.
3. Apply the minimum force necessary and in line with training received.
4. Ensure the presence of other staff who can act as assistants and witnesses.

Procedures:

1. The circumstances and justification for using physical intervention must be recorded immediately in the Major Incident Book. The name of the pupil will then be recorded along with the time, circumstances, witnesses, details of any injury sustained and the pupil's response.
2. The incident must be discussed with the child.
3. The incident must be discussed with the headteacher or assistant headteacher before the end of the school day.
4. Parents or carers will be informed by the headteacher and given the opportunity to discuss the reasons for restraint.

In the event of a complaint the normal complaints procedures of the school will be used. There are specific guidelines on the abuse of children which may also come into play and contact may be made with social services.

TRAINING ISSUES

All responsible adults will be made aware, as part of their induction, of the professional response that is expected in the school in relation to behaviour of pupils. (See examples in para 21 of the Circular)

All staff receive RPI training to ensure correct use of physical intervention. Staff also have access to LA guidance, especially NYCC RPI Guidance (updated 2012), to ensure appropriate procedures are followed.

Copies of this policy will be issued to all "responsible adults."