
**GUIDANCE ON PHYSICAL CONTACT AND THE USE OF PHYSICAL
INTERVENTION IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS**

Children and Young People Portfolio

Responsible Director – Murray Rose Director of Children’s Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update guidance on the use of physical intervention in schools in order to assist school governing bodies in setting policies.

Summary

2. All schools are required to have a published policy covering Physical Contact and the Use of Physical Intervention. This report includes an ‘exemplar policy’ on Physical Contact and Intervention for schools to consider and was developed by a working group of specialist staff.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that Cabinet endorse the guidance for schools and the exemplar policy as a basis for school governing bodies to develop their own policies.

Reasons

4. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) The current local authority guidance does not reflect to the most recent legislation and the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) guidance.
 - (b) Our existing guidance combines a mixture of both guidance and policy. The revised document has now been divided and rewritten as ‘Guidance’ and ‘Exemplar Policy’ in order to help schools establish an appropriate policy.

**Murray Rose
Director of Children’s Services**

Background Papers

Attached:

Appendix 1 Guidance on Physical Contact and the Use of Physical Intervention in Educational Settings. (this contains **Appendix 2 and 3**)

Physical Contact and Intervention Policy (our exemplar policy, attached separately as **Appendix 4**).

Author :S. Cahill: Extension 2062

S17 Crime and Disorder	The guidance will have an effect on S17 Crime and disorder as one of it aims is to prevent criminal behaviour
Health and Well Being	This guidance will impact on health and well being as it aims to keep people safe
Sustainability	This guidance will have no effect on sustainability.
Diversity	This guidance will effect all groups
Wards Affected	This guidance will cover all wards which contain education establishments
Groups Affected	Children and Young People who attend schools and colleges within Darlington
Budget and Policy Framework	This guidance will have no effect on the budget and Policy Framework
Key Decision	This is a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This guidance is consistent with Aspiring Darlington Theme
Efficiency	The guidance will have no impact on efficiency

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. In accordance with the latest national guidance from DCSF, this local guidance is intended to provide clear, practical advice to all Darlington schools on drawing up policies and practice guidelines on the use of physical intervention. The overall aim is to enable staff to operate safely and confidently, whilst preserving the dignity of pupils and maintaining positive relationships with them.
6. Whilst the majority of pupils in most educational settings conform to the expectations of acceptable behaviour, it is acknowledged in law and by Darlington Children's Services that in certain specific circumstances teachers, and others authorised by the head teacher, may need to use restrictive physical intervention (RPI) to keep people safe, prevent criminal behaviour, protect property, or to maintain good order and discipline.
7. The DCSF acknowledges that no school should have a policy of 'no physical contact'. 'Schools and other educational settings should have a policy on the 'Use of Reasonable Force to Control or Restrain Pupils'. To guide staff on the sensitivities associated with any form of physical contact, a school may wish to have an additional general policy on Physical Contact (or Touch), such as administering first aid, giving comfort, toileting and teaching skills in P.E. To assist schools, an 'exemplar policy' for physical intervention has been written, into which has been incorporated a policy for all aspects of appropriate touch. It should be stressed that as effective management of pupil behaviour relies heavily upon teamwork, best practice dictates that any such policy should be formulated with/by the staff applying it, rather than just adopting a non-specific exemplar.
8. A Physical Intervention policy should be 'value driven', and always considered in the context of any other agreed behaviour management policies, such as Physical Contact (Touch), Bullying, Child Protection and Lone Working, along with any associated guidelines. The Policy should be approved formally by the governing body and made known to staff, pupils and parents. The policy should tell people clearly what they should do and explain how to do it. It should be reviewed every 12 months.
9. Schools should keep an up to date record of staff who are authorised to use force. All staff, authorised and unauthorised, need to understand their powers and the options open to them; what is acceptable and what is not. Children's Services helps schools to monitor any physical interventions.
10. This comprehensive new guidance explains what schools need to have in place and how to develop their policies. The exemplar policy is a response to requests from headteachers to help make the process easier and offer greater consistency.

Outcome of Consultation

11. A small working party of head teachers, the manager of the Behaviour Support Service, and the manager of the Residential Care Team met to look at exemplar policies, on 'intervention', and on 'Touch'. They recommended that both strands be merged into a single policy. A draft of the associated Guidance for Schools was circulated, asking for feedback of significant changes. The only feedback since has been schools reporting that

they wanted to implement the policy as soon as possible. There have been no adverse comments.

12. Following the issue of this guidance, work will begin on updating the guidance for residential care units; it is hoped that at the next revision they may be unified into one guidance for all settings.