WOOLDANDS SCHOOL PHYSICAL INTERVENTION POLICY

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WOODLANDS SCHOOL PHYSICAL INTERVENTION STATEMENT

We are a Rights Respecting School, and this policy is underpinned by our continued work of our commitment to UNICEF and the UN Convention of Rights of the Child.

This policy links directly to the following articles of the UN Convention of the Rights of the child.

Children's rights and responsibilities:

- Article 3 - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.
- Article 6 - Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to make sure that children survive and develop to their full potential.
- Article 19 - Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Introduction

Woodlands School is a community special school that provides an appropriate education for pupils aged 2-19 with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties. For some children and young people their learning difficulty may mean that they present with a range of behaviours that challenge the adults that work with them.

This policy follows the CSA policy on the care and control of pupils an **must** be read in conjunction with the school's Behaviour Support Policy. This clearly states the agreed principles underpinning our approach to pupils who may exhibit a range of behaviours and the other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils, child protection and health and safety. The Behaviour Support Policy emphasises the importance of analysing root causes of behaviours and the development of strategies or formal plans, in particular identifying pro-active, active, re-active and post incident strategies.

The policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils to explain the school's arrangements for physical intervention.

Purpose of policy:

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 proactive approaches to behaviour support 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. Woodlands acknowledges that physical techniques are a very small part of our holistic approach to behaviour support and only used as a last resort when all other behaviour support strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk. At all times the following applies:

- Physical restraint is the last resort and has to be absolutely necessary.
- It must involve the least amount of force for the least amount of time.
- The aim is to support recovery and enable the learner to calm.
- In a crisis the best protection advice is for staff to do everything possible not to intervene.

- It should be rarely necessary whilst recognising that some learners' behaviour is such that it is necessitated no matter how good one's behaviour management and when that is the case it must be done well.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in this school:

- Clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where reasonable force is necessary.
- Are provided with appropriate training or staff who have had appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations.

Implications of the policy:

The 2006 Education Act (Section 93) stipulates that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

- Placing him/herself at risk.
- Placing other pupils or staff at risk.
- Behaviour leading to damage to property or committing a criminal offence.
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere within school (this includes authorised out-of-school activities).

There is no legal definition of reasonable force. The use of force can only be regarded as reasonable if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it and the degree of force employed is PROPORTIONATE to the level of challenging behaviour presented or the consequences it is intended to prevent.

Individual members of staff cannot be required or directed to use physical restraint. However, as teaching and non-teaching staff work in 'loco parentis' and should always operate with an appropriate 'Duty of Care', should the school's policy not be adhered to by individuals, it is not unforeseeable that claims of negligence could be levied against them.

The application of any form of physical control places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow this policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention.

The school has trained staff in the PRICE Training method. (PRICE Training is an RRN certified training provider with approved curricula for use in the social care, education and health sectors across a range of populations; children, adults, learning disabilities, mental health, autism, dementia and those with acquired brain injuries.)The PRICE aims and guidelines are central to our approach and are incorporated within this policy.

PRICE Training has developed a system that is rooted in trauma-informed practice and positive behaviour support that places human rights and the well-being of vulnerable people at the very heart of what we do. PRICE TRAING PRINCIPLES: Physical intervention is a Last Resort and should form part of a wider strategy for managing challenging and violent behaviour.

For the majority of the time there will be no need for physical intervention and other methods can be used to de-escalate situations or prevent inappropriate behaviour. Any response to challenging behaviour should be reasonable, proportionate and necessary.

Working Realities

Physical intervention aims to minimise injury, although minor injuries such as bruising or scratching may occasionally occur unintentionally. Such injuries do not necessarily indicate poor professional practice but may be an unintended consequence of maintaining safety.

PRICE works in partnership to:

- protect people's fundamental human rights
- reduce reliance on restrictive practices
- promote a person-centred and therapeutic approach
- create a safer environment for service users and staff
- improve the quality of life of those being held
- reduce placement breakdown and service exclusion

The Legal Context

The document that concerns us most is Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This policy should be read alongside the Department for Education's guidance 'Use of reasonable force' (April 2026) and the school's Safeguarding Policy. Where physical intervention has or may have caused significant harm, staff will follow local safeguarding procedures and inform the designated safeguarding lead immediately. The Headteacher will ensure relevant liaison with local authority safeguarding partners when required.

The guidelines for the use of reasonable force when circumstances justify, staff can:

• Hold a pupil using agreed PRICE techniques,
• Physically interpose between pupils,
•Move a pupil using agreed PRICE techniques.

Decisions on whether the precise circumstances of an incident justify the use of significant force must be reasonable. Sometimes such decisions have to be made quickly, with little time for reflection. Nevertheless, staff need to make the clearest possible judgements about:

a) The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or serious disorder. The more severe, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
b) The chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired result by other means, the more likely it is that using force may be justified; and
c) The relative risk associated with the physical intervention compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.

Examples of situations.

a) A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil.
b) Pupils are fighting, causing risk of injury to themselves or others;
c) A pupil is committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate damage to property.
d) A pupil is causing, or is at risk of causing, injury, or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or object.
e) A pupil escapes from a class or tries to leave school other than at an authorised time. Refusal of a pupil to remain in a particular place IS NOT enough on its own to justify use of force. It would be justifiable where allowing a pupil to leave would:
    i) Entail serious risks to the pupil's safety (taking into account age and understanding), to the safety of other pupils or staff, or of damage to property; or
    ii) Lead to behaviour that prejudices good order and discipline.

Training and Authorisation of Staff

The staff to which the power to use reasonable force are defined in Section 93 of the Education and Inspections act 2006.

They are-

a. any teacher who works at the school,
b. any person whom the head has authorised to have control or charge of pupils, This:
    i) Includes support staff whose job normally includes supervising pupils, learning mentors and lunchtime supervisors.
    ii) Can also include people to whom the head has given temporary authorisation to have control or charge of pupils, such as paid members of staff whose job does not normally involve supervising staff.

Only staff who have satisfactorily completed PRICE training are authorised to use the taught Physical Intervention techniques. A list of staff who have completed this training is maintained by the school and reported to Governors. Once staff have received their full training, refresher training will take place annually.

Accepted Physical Interventions to be used

Listed below are the accepted PRICE strategies that have been taught to staff.

Secondary Strategies Secondary prevention involves strategies that are brought into play once a person's behaviour begins to move away from baseline levels, which includes defusion, de-escalation and touch/hold and physical interventions. These strategies focus on the recognition of an individual's early behavioural signs (physical, emotional, communicative, etc) which can indicate an increase in behavioural disturbance. Secondary strategies can be restrictive or non-restrictive. Such strategies are designed to be used when staff recognise signs of a developing behavioural disturbance, and are aimed at reducing or removing the underlying causes of the behaviour, including issues such as pain, distress or frustration.

Non Restrictive Tertiary strategies. These strategies are used when an actual behaviour of concern is presenting, with the primary aim to bring the incident to an end in a timely and safe manner, with due regard to the individual's rights and dignity. Examples of non-restrictive tertiary strategies include de-escalation, diversion, distraction or strategic capitulation. These are techniques that are used to breakaway/disengage from any unwanted physical contact for example a grab or a hair pull. Breakaway techniques may be completely non-restrictive or have a restrictive component included. Breakaway techniques may also be used to assist another person to disengage from unwanted physical contact. Restrictive Tertiary Strategies Examples of restrictive tertiary strategies include restrictive interventions such as physical restraint, used to bring resolution and a return to safety for everyone. Touch, Escort, Movement (non-restrictive) Touch can be a powerful tool if used and applied correctly and we will be exploring this later.

Self-Protection Strategies, Escorting (restrictive) and RPI (Restrictive Physical Interventions) These are reactive strategies and should only ever be used minimally in extremely exceptional circumstances. If the other aspects of the behaviour response triangle are implemented effectively then staff should rarely need to default to these strategies. (PRICE Instructor Manual [June 2021])

Prevention & Breakaways, Phase 1 Holds and Phase 2 Holds

Preventions & Breakaways

- Triangular positioning
- Walk & Talk
- T Stance/ Safety Stance
- Defensive Stance
- Arrowhead Formation
- Wipe away
- Clothing Grab: single handed
- Hair Grab: rear
- Hair Grab: front
- Ponytail/ Nape of Neck Grab
- Sleeve Grab: single handed
- Wrist Grab: arch release
- Wrist Grab: two handed

- Wrist Grab: scissor release
- Wrist Grab: single-hand
- Bite Prevention (wave)

Phase 1 Holds (Physical Intervention)

- Single Embrace
- Adapted Embrace
- Side Hug
- Adapted Side Hug
- Standing Turn
- Shepherding

Phase 2 (Restrictive Physical Intervention)

- Figure of 4
- Cupped Hands
- Safe location to the knee (Level 1 & 2)
- Straight Arm Transition (Level 1)
- Standing Double Embrace
- Seclusion

NB. Ground Recovery holds are the most restrictive and carry the highest risk. Therefore, staff are not taught floor holds.

Training on Physical Intervention given to staff will include sections on the background, theory, and rationale behind the PRICE approach as well as an understanding of personal space and body language before any physical intervention techniques are taught.

Any Physical Interventions used will need to take account of age, cultural background, gender, stature, and medical history of the student involved.

Physical Intervention is never seen in isolation at Woodlands School. It is but one strategy available to staff and should always be seen as a last resort when all other strategies have failed. Physical interventions can be placed in 2 broad categories:

- Emergency Interventions:

An emergency physical intervention may be necessary if a situation arises that was not foreseen, is uncharacteristic of the pupil and requires a rapid response. Members of staff retain their duty of care to pupils and any response, even in an emergency, must be proportionate to the circumstances. Staff should use the minimum force necessary to prevent injury and maintain safety, consistent with the

training that they have received. Wherever possible assistance will be sought from another member of staff.

- Planned Interventions and Positive Handling Plans:

Planned interventions involve staff employing, where necessary, one or a combination of the strategies mentioned in the previous section as an agreed response to an identified behaviour. This will be documented in a Behaviour Support Plan. The Plan will list the accepted strategies to be used, including both de-escalation methods and Physical Intervention techniques. These plans will be written jointly by the class teacher and a PRICE trained member of staff.

Seclusion

Seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving. Seclusion is not implemented by staff through threat of punishment.

At Woodlands School it is only used as a last resort to safely protect others or a pupil from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. In such circumstances, the pupil is not acting with intent. The place to which the pupil is confined will be safe and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil. The pupil will be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil will be allowed to leave. An incident involving the use of seclusion must be recorded and reported in accordance with the procedures outlined on page 8 'Reporting and Monitoring Incidents'.

Risk assessment

Whenever it is foreseeable that a pupil might require a Physical Intervention, then a Physical Intervention Risk Assessment must added to the pupils BSP. It is essential that the outcome of any assessments are known to all relevant staff and other parties, such as parents/carers. The Physical Intervention Risk Assessment are available for all Physical and Restrictive interventions. (Appendix 1 for an example of a Risk Physical Intervention Assessment.)

When reviewing the relevant Risk Assessment:-

- Involve relevant agencies who may have an involvement with the individual, and their family members;
- Involve key people such as health professionals, social workers, specialist challenging behaviour nurse, psychologist etc. where necessary;
- Identify behaviours and settings that result in harm or damage from past incident reports/records;
- Document the agreed management strategies and the risk levels;
- If risks of intervening remain high risk, seek specialist advice and support;
- Agree review date and monitor that the protocols and management strategies are working effectively;

- Communicate the outcome of the risk assessment and management strategies/protocol to all relevant parties;
- Implement necessary training if training needs are identified.

When the need for Restrictive Physical Intervention is agreed, it is important that appropriate steps are taken to minimise the risks to staff and pupils. Adequate staff must be available to safely complete any holding and restraint that is undertaken as part of a planned strategy.

It is essential that following any intervention, risk assessments are reviewed. It may be necessary to call a formal review meeting and revise the risk assessment and management plan. When reviewing the risk assessments, it is important to review trends, personality dynamics, factors surrounding the incident, what happened in the days and hours beforehand to look for triggers or contributing factors.

The use of a physical intervention will be the outcome of a professional judgement made by staff on the basis of this school policy, it is avoided whenever possible and will not be used for staff convenience.

Staff are not expected to intervene physically against their better judgement nor are they expected to place themselves at unreasonable risk. In such circumstances, they must take steps to minimise risks. For example, by removing other pupils and calling for assistance.

Reporting and Monitoring of Incidents.

After a Restrictive Physical Intervention has taken place, the following steps will be taken:

- A Restrictive Physical Intervention Incident Record will be completed as soon as possible (no later than the same day).
- The incident will be logged on CPOMS.
- Parents / Carers will be informed by telephone and in writing via Tapestry by the Class Teacher, Deputy Head teacher or Head teacher.
- Any injuries will be recorded following the normal school procedures.
- The Head teacher / Deputy Head teacher will check that there is no cause for concern regarding the actions of adults involved. If it is felt that an action has 'caused or put a child at risk of significant harm' the Head teacher will follow the school's child protection procedures and also inform parents/carers.
- Debriefing will be had for all those involved following an incident of Physical Intervention and support available by the Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher, The Behaviour Lead or Class Teacher.
- The follow-up conversation will facilitate reflection, learning and to support pupil and staff wellbeing. This conversation should be framed as part of the overall debriefing process and look to understand what happened during the incident and why, based on both the staff and pupils involved.
- Where needed we will continue to monitor pupil and staff wellbeing and provide additional support if needed.
- Additionally, any pupil who witnesses an incident of restrictive intervention where a peer may have been injured or become distressed should also be provided with appropriate support where necessary

Appendix 1 -Physical Intervention Risk Assessment

School: Woodlands School		Risk assessment completed by: Role:
Assessment Date:		Review Date:
Name of child:	DOB:	Year:
REASON FOR ASSESSMENT		
Please outline the concerns that indicate the physical intervention may be required:		
PUPIL INFORMATION **MEDICAL INFORMATION** ☐ Asthma ☐ Epilepsy ☐ Diabetes ☐ Heart Condition ☐ Mobility Difficulties ☐ Mental Health Needs ☐ Other:		
SEND/ ADDITIONAL NEEDS ☐ Autism Spectrum Condition ☐ ADHD ☐ Speech & Language Difficulties ☐ Learning Difficulties ☐ SEMH Needs ☐ Other:		

KNOWN TRIGGERS

Tick all that apply:

☐ Unstructured time
☐ Transitions between activities
☐ Noise levels
☐ Demands placed upon pupil
☐ Changes to routine
☐ Peer conflict
☐ Staff instructions
☐ Sensory overload
☐ Other

EARLY WARNING SIGNS

Observed behaviours indicating escalation:

☐ Refusal
☐ Raised voice
☐ Swearing
☐ Anxiety
☐ Pacing
☐ Crying
☐ Running away
☐ Throwing objects
☐ Physical aggression
☐ Other

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risks to the Pupil

☐ Injury to self
☐ Running into traffic
☐ Self-harm
☐ Emotional distress
☐ Damage to relationships
☐ Other

Risks to Staff

☐ Hitting
☐ Kicking
☐ Punching
☐ Biting
☐ Scratching

☐ Spitting
☐ Other

Risks to Others
☐ Physical injury
☐ Bullying/intimidation
☐ Damage to property
☐ Disruption to learning
☐ Other

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Strategies to be used before any physical intervention:

☐ Calm verbal reassurance
☐ Clear choices
☐ Distraction
☐ Humour
☐ Safe space offered
☐ Reduced audience
☐ Planned movement break
☐ Visual support
☐ adult support
☐ Other

OVERALL RISK RATING

☐ LOW - Low to minor harm or upset. Injuries or ill health causing no significant long term effects and no significant absence from work

☐ MEDIUM - Injuries or ill health causing short term disability/absence from work or school (over three days absence)

☐ HIGH - Major injuries or ill health causing long term disability/absence from work or school

☐ MAJOR - Death

Reasons:

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION PLAN

Physical intervention will only be considered when:

☐ There is a risk of injury to the pupil.
☐ There is a risk of injury to others.
☐ Serious property damage is occurring.
☐ The pupil is attempting to access a place of significant danger.
☐ Other exceptional circumstances.
☐ If the risk is Medium, High or Major.

Details:

APPROVED STAFF

Staff Name	Training Completed	Date of Training

OVERALL RISK RATING

☐ LOW - Low to minor harm or upset. Injuries or ill health causing no significant long term effects and no significant absence from work

☐ MEDIUM - Injuries or ill health causing short term disability/absence from work or school (over three days absence)

☐ HIGH - Major injuries or ill health causing long term disability/absence from work or school

☐ MAJOR - Death

Reasons:

Signed:	Role: Class Teacher	Date:
Signed:	Role: Behaviour Lead	Date:
Signed:	Role: Parent / Carer	Date:

Appendix 2 - Physical Intervention Guide

Type of Intervention		Behaviour Support Plan	Physical Intervention Risk Assessment (High/ Very high risk)
Prevention & Breakaways	Walk & Talk	✓	
	Wipe away	✓	
	Clothing Grab: single handed	✓	
	Hair Grab: rear	✓	
	Ponytail/ Nape of Neck Grab	✓	
	Sleeve Grab: single handed	✓	
	Wrist Grab: arch release	✓	
	Wrist Grab: two handed	✓	
	Wrist Grab: scissor release	✓	
	Wrist Grab: single-hand	✓	
	Bite Prevention (wave)	✓	
Phase 1 Holds	Single Embrace	✓	
	Adapted Embrace	✓	
	Side Hug	✓	
	Adapted Side Hug	✓	

	Standing Turn	✓	
	Shepherding	✓	
Phase 2 Holds	Figure of 4		✓
	Cupped Hands		✓
	Safe location to the knees (Level 1 & 2)		✓
	Straight Arm Transition (Level 1)		✓
	Standing Double Embrace		✓
	Seclusion		✓