



**MERCHANT  
TAYLORS'  
SCHOOLS**

For Boys and Girls  
aged 4 to 18 years

# Physical Intervention Policy

**Title** Physical Intervention Policy  
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## Policy for Physical Intervention

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In developing this policy, Merchant Taylors' Schools acknowledge the advice and guidance from the Board of Governors, the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the School Nurse. The Schools take violence and the risk of violence to all members of staff, pupils and visitors seriously, therefore recognising the importance and their responsibility in dealing with 'physical intervention' appropriately. This Policy also applies to all children within the EYFS. All new members of staff will be informed of the policy during their induction period.

### Aims

- To promote a safe, secure and productive workplace and educational environment for all pupils, staff and visitors
- To protect the Schools' property and grounds
- To ensure the health, safety and well being of all pupils, staff and visitors
- To ensure that every 'person' within the Schools is free from unreasonable, unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful use of physical intervention
- To ensure that physical intervention shall only be used with extreme caution in emergency conditions, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate and to minimize harm to the pupil, members of staff or visitors
- To establish clear guidelines as to the circumstances in which physical intervention may be appropriate and thereby ensuring physical intervention is **NEVER** used as a punishment. The use of unwarranted physical intervention is likely to constitute a criminal offence.
- To describe what actions staff may take when incidents occur (during the school day or outside school hours, on school premises or school trip or outing) that may require the physical restraint of a pupil, member of staff or visitor to the Schools, whether invited or as an intruder
- To define the procedures that must be taken immediately after such an incident

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order within the Schools. It is recognised that the majority of pupils respond positively to the discipline and control practised by staff. 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. However all staff (teaching or support staff) should have a sound knowledge for dealing with pupils, other staff members or visitors who are distressed, angry or potentially violent. Techniques for calming pupils, staff or visitors, or redirecting their outbursts should always be used prior to the use of any physical contact or intervention.

The Education Act 1996 forbids corporal punishment but allows reasonable force to be permissible when it is necessary to prevent a pupil, member of staff, visitor from:-

- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing serious damage to property
- Committing a criminal offence
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the Schools or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom or elsewhere

### **Anticipating the use of physical intervention**

All staff are encouraged to report concerns relating to routines, individuals and situations that have the potential to lead to incidents requiring the use of physical intervention. All staff are also informed on the necessity to monitor risk in their own teaching environment.

If it is considered likely that a pupil will be sufficiently disruptive to require the use of physical intervention (whether for medical, special needs or another reason), the parents will be consulted and an appropriate plan of action agreed.

### **Situations where physical intervention might be required**

- A person attacking another person
- Pupils fighting
- A pupil causing, or likely to cause damage or injury by rough play, accident, wilful action or misuse of dangerous materials and items
- A pupil running in a corridor where there is a risk of accident
- A pupil trying to leave school
- A pupil defying repeated instructions to leave a classroom
- A pupil seriously disrupting a lesson
- An intruder within the Schools' grounds causing disruption, damage to the property

NB – not all of these situations are applicable to all age groups

Physical intervention will only be used in order for the Schools to carry out their duty of care towards the pupil, member of staff or visitor concerned and other users of the Schools' buildings and property. The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled and the nature of the harm they may cause. Therefore the minimum physical intervention should be used for the shortest period necessary. The risk must be assessed for the female member of staff (especially if pregnant) when any situation may occur to prevent injury to herself. However, any staff faced with a situation where physical intervention may be required immediately should adhere to the following wherever possible:-

- Send for help immediately – not only to help but to ensure that there are adult witnesses
- Appraise the situation quickly and honestly and decide whether or not it is controllable by oneself – especially in terms of physical strength.
- Send away any other pupils who may be at risk or who may be exacerbating the situation.
- Intervene non-physically as quickly as possible, using a calm voice and displaying a calm and authoritative demeanour, using 'avoiding confrontation' and 'de-escalation' techniques as outlined below
- Try to interpose oneself between the pupil, member of staff or visitor [or between the 'person' and the object at risk] without using physical contact, and without putting oneself at risk
- Use physical contact to restrain pupil[s], member of staff or visitor, bearing in mind the guidelines below, whilst explaining in a calm and measured manner why the action is being taken, and where the 'person' is going
- Continue to talk calmly and non-judgementally to the 'person' while they regain their composure and become able to follow normal verbal instructions

## Non-physical techniques

### **Avoiding confrontation**

- Do intervene early
- Do appear calm and confident
- Do try to maintain eye contact
- Do get close if possible and talk quietly
- Do avoid an audience
- Do restate expectations
- Do allow time and space and offer choices
- Do get someone else to take over if it appears to be personal or if problem escalates or if it appears unmanageable
- Do not shout or appear angry
- Do not ask 'open' questions
- Do not make promises that cannot be fulfilled
- Do not make personal comments
- Do not back the pupil, member of staff or visitor into a corner

### **De-escalation**

- Do sit down and break eye contact
- Do divert the focus [e.g. by humour and not sarcasm]
- Do encourage, talk and be prepared to listen
- Do be prepared to lose face
- Don't take angry comments personally
- Don't invade personal space
- Don't insist on one solution

### **Unacceptable and unreasonable physical intervention techniques**

The Schools do not include a policy of training staff in particular physical intervention techniques, as techniques taught might not be appropriate to the age, gender and physical development of the pupils.

It is considered better to identify types of physical intervention that should **NOT** be used on people especially children. Whenever possible ensure that 2 members of staff carry out any physical intervention. Do **NOT** use any of the following types of physical contact:-

- Holding around the neck or by the collar or in any other way that might restrict the person's ability to breathe [ this includes double arm lock]
- Twisting or forcing limbs against joints
- Striking, slapping, shaking or kicking a 'person'
- Tripping up
- Holding by the hair or ear or lifting off the ground
- Holding face down on the ground
- Holding in any way that may be considered to be indecent or lead to actual injury to the person

In an emergency **any** member of staff will have the authority to use physical intervention techniques.

### **Procedure following an Incident**

If any incident takes place which requires physical intervention or the physical restraint of a pupil, member of staff or visitor, the following actions should be taken:-

- The Headmistress/Headmaster or most senior member of staff present ie Deputy Head (Pastoral) on site must be informed immediately or as soon as possible.
- The staff involved should complete a written report for the Headmistress/Headmaster.
- The Headmistress/Headmaster and the School Nurse should make a decision as to whether or not medical assistance is required for either the pupil, member of staff or visitor.
- The Headmistress/Headmaster should make a decision as to whether or not the incident should be reported as a 'Safeguarding Children' issue. If it is decided that the incident should be reported, then the Headmistress/Headmaster should contact the police (Crosby Police 0151 709 6010), the LEA on when and how to contact the parents/guardians.
- A record of the incident and a copy of any reports must be retained for future reference.
- Members of staff involved in the incident should be offered a 'debriefing' session as soon as possible afterwards.

### **Incident Report Checklist**

- Name of pupil, member of staff or visitor
- Date and time of incident
- Name and title of person writing the report
- Exact location of incident [e.g. building, classroom, corridor]
- Conditions [e.g. weather, lighting, slippery floor]
- List of key participants/witnesses including names, addresses, telephone numbers etc
- Complete description of incident – what led up to the incident, at what point were you alerted, what verbal and/or physical interventions were attempted, why these interventions were required, what was the response, and how was the incident resolved
- Any emergency action taken
- Consequences [e.g. injuries suffered, damage to property] during the incident
- Persons notified of the incident
- Persons receiving copy of the report
- Signature of person writing the report

Confidentiality must be maintained at all times so as not to prejudice any subsequent disciplinary or exclusion hearing.

### **Complaints**

Any complaint following the use of physical intervention will be considered according to the procedures outlined in the Schools' policy for dealing with complaints made against a member of staff.

If a complaint is made by parents/guardians claiming that a pupil has been assaulted by a member of staff, 'Safeguarding Children' procedures should be followed automatically.