

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils within Mavisbank School. It is designed to explain the school's arrangements for care and managing behaviour. Its contents should be made available to all staff/parents/carers and pupils. This policy has been developed in response to the recommendations of 'North Lanarkshire Council Physical Restraint etc'.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies (e.g. behaviour, anti-bullying, time out) listed in the Policy Handbook.

PURPOSE

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure the promoting of positive behaviour. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our school respond positively to the behaviour support strategies 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.

This policy seeks to ensure that staff in Mavisbank 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 these difficult situations and understand fully the rationale and implications of the guidance given in North Lanarkshire Council's 'Physical Intervention in Schools' document. This policy should also be explained to pupils and made available to parents on request.

PRINCIPLES

All staff and pupils at Mavisbank School have a right to:

- be treated with respect and dignity;
- work in a safe and healthy environment and be protected from harm;
- receive adequate information, support and training.

APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT

Mavisbank School staff have a responsibility to act at all times in a manner which reflects positively on their professional status. Whilst it is recognised that there are situations in which appropriate physical contact occurs in the school setting between staff and pupils, it must be understood that to undertake any form of physical control places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to those circumstances described in this policy. Staff therefore have a responsibility to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention.

Reasonable force may only be permissible when it is necessary to prevent a pupil from:

- injuring themselves or others;
- causing serious damage to property;
- committing a criminal offence.

Where no other form of control is available and where it is necessary to intervene.

The school adopts as part of this policy the advice and guidelines in North Lanarkshire Council's 'Physical Intervention in Schools' document. Staff should not normally use force to maintain order or to avoid damage to property unless the action of the young person's actions pose a threat to themselves or another.

AUTHORISED STAFF

In line with North Lanarkshire Council on physical intervention all staff in Mavisbank School are authorised, within the content of this Policy and the legal position indicated above, to use reasonable force to restrain pupils.

The Head Teacher is responsible for making clear to whom such authorisation has been made, in what circumstances and settings they may use force, and for what duration of time this authorisation will last. The Head Teacher will ensure that those authorised are aware of, and understand properly, what the authorisation entails.

All peripatetic teaching staff and visiting NLC staff will work within the policy of their own Service which should reflect that of NLC and that of Mavisbank School. Whilst on school premises they will be expected to follow the procedures of the school and report any incidents in which they are involved in accordance with their Service policy.

TRAINING SUPPORT

The Head Teacher will ensure adequate training is provided for all authorised staff, teaching and non-teaching in order to operate this policy. Responsibility for co-ordinating this training will be the responsibility of the Head Teacher

Members of staff will not be expected to undertake the use of reasonable force without knowledge of the school's policy. New staff will be fully briefed prior to authorising their participation. Training will include clarification of the circumstances when physical intervention should be used.

Staff involved in incidents of physical intervention will be offered the opportunity to access personal support, including counselling, at their request to the Head Teacher.

RECORDING & REPORTING

As soon as reasonably practicable following an incident in which physical force has been used, the member of staff involved will inform the Head Teacher or other member of the Senior Management Team following this up with a written report, in line with North Lanarkshire Council's intervention document 4.20 and 4.21. Staff involved will be 'debriefed' as soon as is appropriate after the incident by a member of the Senior Management Team

The School will keep an up to date record of all incidents where reasonable force has been used in the school's confidential incident book folder. All Parents, Carers and where appropriate social workers will be informed as soon as possible.

Reviewed and amended: John Lochrie, Eileen McDonnell

January 2010, February 2015

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