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| Hambleton Primary Academy  **2025-2026** | A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | Physical Intervention Policy |
| Approved by: | Holly Wood - Headteacher | Date: September 2025 |
| Last reviewed on: | September 2025 | |
| Next review due by: | September 2026 | |

**Introduction**

This policy outlines the guidelines and procedures for using physical intervention when dealing with challenging behaviours at Hambleton Primary Academy. Our school is committed to creating a safe environment, utilising a TeamTeach approach that prioritises positive behaviour support and de-escalation techniques. Physical intervention is used only as a last resort to protect individuals or property.

Based on your request and the DfE guidance referenced in your policy, here is a new introductory clause you can add to clarify the distinction between general reasonable force/guidance and formal physical intervention. This will strengthen your policy by setting a clear, legally-backed context from the very beginning.

**Clarification on Reasonable Force and Physical Guidance**

This policy operates under the legal framework of the Department for Education's guidance on the use of reasonable force. Our school's primary aim is to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils. In line with DfE advice, the term ‘reasonable force’ covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This includes the use of a minimal amount of physical contact, such as guiding a child by the hand or arm, to ensure their safety and prevent them from entering an unsafe environment.

Not all instances of physical contact for the purpose of ensuring a child’s safety constitute a formal ‘physical intervention’ or ‘restraint’. The use of reasonable force to physically guide a child away from danger, when acting proactively to safeguard them, is an acceptable form of control and does not necessarily fall under the formal protocols for physical restraint or require specialised training such as the TeamTeach Positive Handling Training Programme. Physical intervention is used only as a last resort

**Definitions**

* Physical Intervention: Any form of physical force used to restrict the free movement of a person's body.
* De-escalation: Verbal and non-verbal techniques used to calm a situation and prevent the need for physical intervention.
* Reasonable Force: The minimum amount of force necessary to achieve the desired outcome of preventing harm to self or others.
* Serious Harm: Significant physical injury, psychological distress, or damage to property.
* Physical Guidance: The use of light-touch physical contact, such as a hand on the back or arm, to direct a child to a safe location. This is considered a form of reasonable force but does not constitute a formal 'physical intervention' or 'restraint' and does not require TeamTeach certification. It is used proactively to prevent a situation from escalating.

**Prevention and De-escalation (TeamTeach Emphasis)**

* Proactive Strategies: Relevant staff receive training in TeamTeach principles, including:
  + Understanding triggers and antecedents to challenging behaviours
  + Positive behaviour support and proactive classroom management
  + Effective communication skills
  + Graduated de-escalation techniques appropriate to the setting and population served
* Individualised Plans: For individuals with known behaviour challenges, a team will develop a plan that includes preventative strategies, TeamTeach de-escalation techniques, and may specify approved physical intervention techniques only if necessary to protect safety.

**Authorised Physical Intervention Techniques (TeamTeach)**

* Staff will use only TeamTeach-trained and approved techniques. Techniques emphasize safety and control, never punishment.
* Staff must maintain current TeamTeach certification to be authorized for physical intervention use.

**When Physical Intervention is Justified (TeamTeach)**

* Physical intervention aligned with TeamTeach principles will only be used:
  + To prevent an individual from causing immediate serious harm to themselves or others.
  + To prevent serious damage to property.
  + When all other de-escalation TeamTeach interventions have been exhausted or are deemed inappropriate to the situation.
  + "To prevent a child from leaving a designated secure area and entering an unsafe environment (e.g., a public road or unsecured premises)."
  + This clarifies that proactive safeguarding is a legitimate reason for physical guidance, even if a child is not currently causing "serious harm" or "damaging property."

**Use of Force (TeamTeach)**

* The minimum amount of force necessary, as dictated by the situation and TeamTeach training, will be used to achieve the desired, safe outcome.
* Physical intervention will be discontinued as soon as the individual is no longer a threat to themselves or others.
* Staff are prohibited from using physical intervention techniques that inflict pain, restrict breathing, or are likely to cause injury. These are never in line with TeamTeach principles.

**Documentation and Reporting**

* Incident Reporting: Any use of physical intervention must be immediately documented with a detailed report that includes:
  + Description of events leading up to the incident
  + De-escalation techniques attempted
  + Specific physical intervention techniques used
  + Duration of the intervention
  + Individuals involved and any injuries sustained
  + Post-incident follow-up
* Reporting to Authorities: Incidents will be reported according to any local/national regulations or as outlined in contracts with partner agencies.
* Reporting to Parents/Guardians: Parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible following an incident.

**Review and Debriefing**

* Incident Review: A team will review each incident involving physical intervention to:
  + Determine if the intervention was justified
  + Identify any alternative strategies that could have been used
  + Update individual behaviour plans as needed
* Staff Support: Staff involved in physical intervention will be offered debriefing and support.

**Training (TeamTeach Emphasis)**

* Initial and ongoing TeamTeach training is mandatory for staff authorised to use physical intervention techniques. This includes:
  + This physical intervention policy
  + Positive behaviour support
  + TeamTeach de-escalation techniques
  + Approved physical intervention techniques (with professional TeamTeach certification)
  + Documentation and reporting procedures

**Policy Review**

The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2026.**