



St. Denys Primary School

Dundee Road
St. Denys
Southampton
Hampshire SO17 2ND

Tel: (023) 8055 6982

Fax: (023) 8039 9982

e-mail: info@stdenysprimary.co.uk

Website: www.stdenysprimary.co.uk

Deputy Headteacher: Mr Billy Davies

Admin. Officers: Ms L Mooney, Mrs J Davies

Physical Intervention Policy ~ COVID 19 Addendum June 2020

This addendum to the Physical Intervention Policy of St Denys Primary School is for use during the arrangements for education of students in school during the Covid-19 partial school closures. It is to be used in conjunction with, and read alongside, the Physical Intervention Policy for policy, ethos and approach.

This is a stressful time for us all, children will be confused and may find altered routines and changes difficult to cope with. It is important that the core principles of a Positive Behaviour Support, child-centred approach are maintained and human rights are respected, even when everyday lives are affected by national restrictions. It is likely that children with learning disabilities, mental health conditions and children with autism will be more vulnerable to stress and anxiety.

The focus should always be on using early prevention and recognition of a deterioration of challenging behaviour. It is essential that staff have the confidence and skills to work both preventatively and in ways that reduce potential stress, and that they have de-escalation skills to use if needed. Despite the social distance guidance advised by the government, staff must assess whether not intervening may result in a high risk of significant harm. Deciding a course of action related to this complex issue will always be difficult so staff will need to consider actions they take and the possible risk of infection they might face contrasted with the risk of safety to the child or others.

Physical intervention during this time will be the best, worst outcome and used as a last resort that is reasonable and proportionate. Staff will need to use dynamic assessments to attempt safer methods of restriction that do not involve physical intervention such as environmental through use of supervised withdrawal.

What responsibilities do the school community have?

At St Denys Primary School, we will continue to endeavour to prevent the need for Physical Intervention by promoting the following expectations as outlined in our main PI policy. The additional expectations are outlined below:

- Ensure that children understand the expectations regarding social distance and enhanced hygiene and why they are important
- Ensure that children are prepared for the 'different' school whilst social distance and enhanced hygiene rules are in place from the government, this could be through the use of visual aids or social stories
- Create a careful transition plan with the parent to support the child's return to school with clear bespoke actions that meet the individual needs of the child

- Review the child's Positive Handling Plan (if they have one) regularly and after each incident for any recommendations for supporting their behaviours of concern as well as the common triggers for their behaviour.
- Ensure that PHPs are shared with all staff and signed by parents
- Avoid flashpoints that may trigger incidents of challenging behaviour
- Update risk assessments in response to incidents of challenging behaviour
- Reduce academic pressure as necessary to reduce the risk of physical intervention
- Enable the child, where appropriate, to exercise choice and control over decisions that affect them, seek their views and input about sudden changes to their activities.
- Suggest alternative things to do instead and develop different strategies and approaches.
- Identify the child's preferred methods of communication, as effective communication can help to reduce their anxiety about any changes that need to happen.
- Communicate and try to explain to children about the changes to their day-day activities and plans and why.
- Share information about adjustments and changes that may happen because of medical isolation and/or due to the closure of services.
- If the child does not have a behaviour support plan, draw on the school's existing understanding of their interaction and communication preferences.
- Consider known triggers for the person's behaviour of concern and put in place strategies to reduce these. Some common triggers are boredom, sudden changes to routines, missing friends or families, and communication difficulties.
- To prevent resorting to the use of physical restraint or other forms of restrictive practice, it is important to speak to the person about why self-isolation and social distancing are needed. Convey the seriousness of the situation if action is taken.
- During this difficult time, it is more important to focus on comforting and reassuring the person, and providing them with a level of safe choice and control. The use of physical restraint should be the last resort of intervention.
- Liaise with the LA to work with the family and offer support if needed

What responsibilities do parents have?

- Communicate with school staff any changes to routine
- Work alongside school staff to draw up effective and comprehensive Positive handling Plans
- Be available to attend school, straight away, to provide immediate physical support
- Accept that my child's timetable and provision may have to reflect the bespoke measures required to support them safely e.g. reduced timetable, reduction in academic pressure

In the event of Physical Intervention

Every effort will be made to implement preventative measures to reduce or minimise incidents of challenging or hazardous behaviours. However, in the event of an incident that is assessed to require Physical Intervention:

- School will ensure that a currently trained staff member is always on site
- Staff will call upon SLT to lead
- Staff will minimise time, and restrictiveness of any Physical Intervention used
- Where appropriate, Physical intervention will be used to escort to a safe space to reduce the need to hold in a prolonged confined space
- SLT to ensure staff numbers involved in Physical are minimised, to prevent cross infection including those adults in the immediate environment
- Staff to wear whatever PPE is appropriate/available and follow infection control advice
- It is vital that staff remember their training and ensure that their heads are facing away from the child when in hold
- Parental support to be sought immediately
- Parents to attend school and assume responsibility for their child