

Management of Actual or Potential Aggression in Primary Schools

A Comparison Between New Zealand and The United Kingdom

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Primary Principals' Sabbatical Report Term 2 2018

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Thank you for sharing your contexts and making time to share your successes and challenges.

I would also like to extend a very special thank you to Paula Thomas who managed Tokoiti School wonderfully while I was on sabbatical.

Focus of the Sabbatical

The purpose of this sabbatical was to gather information about best practice in terms of MAPA training, implementation, monitoring & record keeping within school communities.

As another lens for my sabbatical activity I wanted to look at digital fluency and how learning in this area can support students that are struggling with current learning contexts and link this to the MAPA concepts.

About the Author

I have spent my teaching career working in low decile schools and have been a principal of a variety of schools since 2005. I have spent many years leading a special education residential facility before moving to my current position at Tokoiti School in 2013.

Background

In discussions with many colleagues across a variety of social and educational contexts, we have noted anecdotally that the students we are working with have a higher incidence of high and complex needs with many being diagnosed with a range of health conditions that impact on students in the classroom. In 2016 I approached the Ministry of Education to seek support for safe restraint training after being in situations where restraint was necessary to protect the safety of students. The Ministry at that time was in the process of developing the draft guidelines for restraint and could not provide training or support with this. In discussions with a senior instructor in Management of Actual or Potential Aggression systems, I became an instructor in 2017. With the publication of the Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Physical Restraint in 2017 and with the Education (Physical Restraint) Rules 2017 being signed in August 2017 the subject of training and support became a discussion I was involved in frequently as it was difficult to access, and rule 10 placed the burden on schools to *"ensure teachers and authorised staff members are suitably supported and trained"*. This was the context in which I began my sabbatical.

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Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA)

Management of Actual or Potential Aggression or MAPA as it is referred to had its genesis in the United States. Developed in the 1970's was the forerunner of MAPA, Nonviolent Crisis InterventionSM training provided a balance in behaviour management that was unique at the time.

Crisis Prevention Institute was established in the United States in 1980 for human services professionals to address the need for training in safe, respectful, non-invasive methods designed to manage disruptive and potentially aggressive behaviour in a way that was compatible with staff duty to provide the best possible care.

CPI Europe

Positive Options, a UK-based training and consultancy organisation, joined the CPI family in 2010. With a philosophy and training practices that were rooted in person-centred thinking, action, and excellence, Positive Options brought with them a range of organisational solutions, including physical and non-physical interventions. The partnership currently delivers comprehensive training and services for staff who work with vulnerable individuals, having brought together our UK and European operations into a single, stronger unit—CPI Europe.

CPI Europe now incorporates different training specialties with added flexibility and content, and improved delivery methods for our MAPA® Management of Actual or Potential Aggression, Dementia Capable Care: Behaviours and CH-3SM Holding Skills for Essential Care and Treatment programmes.¹

About Pivotal Education

Pivotal Education Ltd is an education training consultancy working across the whole of the UK and internationally. They are the leading specialist in behaviour and classroom management in the UK. More than 1,000 schools and colleges use the Pivotal approach to behaviour management, a proven system that works in every classroom, with every adult, and every learner.

From high performing mainstream schools and schools with challenging situations to vast Further Education colleges, from Independent Schools to Free Schools and Multi-Academy Trusts, from early years to adults, Pivotal Education serves a wide array of education professionals.

Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), the world leader in crisis prevention and de-escalation training, announced on 16th March 2017, that they finalised the acquisition of UK-based Pivotal Education Ltd, an award-winning education consultancy and training company.²

New Zealand is under CPI Europe management, and with the UK having training and support systems in place for several years to support teachers and schools, and it would also have years of best practice and knowledge to draw from.

¹ (n.d.). CPI's History - Crisis Prevention Institute. Retrieved May 2, 2018, from https://www.crisisprevention.com/en-gb/About-CPI/CPI-s-History ² (n.d.). Acquisition of Pivotal Education - Crisis Prevention Institute. Retrieved May 2, 2018, from

https://www.crisisprevention.com/en-gb/About-CPI/Acquisition-of-Pivotal-Education

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MAPA® Training

A full programme comprises 10 units taught over two days - 13 hours.

- 1. The CPI Crisis Development ModelSM
- 2. Non-Verbal Communication
- 3. Verbal and Paraverbal Communication
- 4. Verbal Communication
- 5. Precipitating Factors, Rational Detachment, Integrated Experience
- 6. Fear and Anxiety
- 7. Decision Making
- 8. Physical Interventions Disengagement Skills
- 9. Physical Interventions Holding Skills
- 10. Post-Crisis

The MAPA programme is a behaviour management programme designed to help staff provide for the best possible Care, Welfare, Safety and Security for everyone, especially in crisis moments. MAPA does not replace normal classroom and school processes. MAPA fits in as part of a behaviour support plan as a secondary intervention, Crisis/Reactive intervention and Post Crisis support and learning. MAPA becomes another set of tools to complement and build on the work that schools already do.

For staff, MAPA Foundation training will boost their confidence to defuse potentially challenging situations, equip them with the skills to appropriately physically intervene, reduce the risk of physical injury and accidents and strengthen the relationships between colleagues and with those in their care. For students MAPA Foundation training will maintain their dignity at all times, provide a positive and respectful environment, guide them towards making positive behaviour choices and develop their coping skills for difficult situations.³

Tokoiti School and MAPA

In 2016 Tokoiti School sought support for training in secondary responses including physical intervention skills, but could not obtain support from the Ministry of Education to do so. I worked with Dwight McDowell, Regional Operations Manager of Stand Children's Services and MAPA instructor who advised that it would be more cost efficient for the school to train their own instructor. The Board agreed with this and I was trained in the beginning of 2017, with the rest of the school staff trained by myself shortly after.

I discussed with several colleagues the pros and cons of teaching the holding skills component of the MAPA Foundation skills and I developed a view of these skills as similar to First Aid training, and in particular the Physical Interventions as analogous to the CPR skills, training essential to get right, but would be used rarely. This helped me in my training and in explaining the training to others. I have found that MAPA skills keep the dignity of the student, and that the staff being trained have a new understanding for the precipitating factors that were influencing behaviour and help staff avoid becoming a precipitating factor themselves. Being part of a Community of Learning has also meant that I have been able to train and certify teachers from other schools and Early Childhood Centres.

³ (n.d.). MAPA (Management of Actual or Potential Aggression) | CPI. Retrieved September 8, 2018, from

https://www.crisisprevention.com/en-nz/Specialties/MAPA-Management-of-Actual-or-Potential-Aggressio

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Rationale for sites chosen to visit

In making the choice for visiting sites I consulted with both CPI and Pivotal Education as I wanted to see examples of best practice across a range of different contexts. My list of site visits included CPI, a special residential school serving students aged 9-16, a central London primary school, a community of small village schools and a larger school all feeding into the same high schools as well as a special education learning support team.

These sites were examples of best practice using both MAPA and Pivotal Education supports with a few having Nurture Group units as well. I have used Nurture Groups in different schools here in New Zealand and I was interested to see how they operated.

One resource spoken about by many of the sites I visited was a book written by Paul Dix called *"When the Adults Change, Everything Changes"*⁴. This book was then presented to me by Mark Gorman at CPI and I recommend it.

I was also interested in how digital technology was being used in these sites to track and analyse incidents, and tools that were being used to support students.

Environment

The first thing that struck me coming from a small rural school was the security surrounding all the school sites in the UK. Tokoiti School lies on the outskirts of Milton a small town 60 kilometres south of Dunedin in the South Island. We have large playing fields and the school is surrounded by trees on its borders. Until 2017 the classrooms were able to be accessed internally with no facility to isolate particular classrooms.

Each site in the UK implemented several security steps, with every school being able to lock each individual area and with no ability for any visitor to access the site without having gone through security. This security was implemented after the Dunblane massacre near Stirling. All of the sites expected appointments to be set with photographic identification required before a Visitor ID would be issued. Most times this ID required the visitor to submit to having their photo taken. On some of the sites all electronic devices were required to be surrendered to the Head Teacher on entering the school.

These security systems, while designed to keep anyone from wandering onto the school premises, also became invaluable when the school needed to deal with students that were struggling managing their emotions and consequently their behaviour at school. The sites could ensure that positive learning interactions were able to continue even when the most extreme behaviour was being exhibited.

On one site I visited, I witnessed the MAPA procedures being used to de-escalate several students. One student was upset over a perceived failure of the staff to follow up on an issue from the earlier that day. This student was joined by a number of other students who encouraged the original student to become more irrational and verbally vent as well as beginning to throw furniture. Staff communicated with each other and with the students calmly and effectively, ensuring that the relevant staff members were informed and plans of action were formulated.

⁴ (2018, May 30). When the Adults Change, Everything Changes - Pivotal Education. Retrieved September 8, 2018, from <u>https://pivotaleducation.com/product/adults-chanae-everythina-chanaes/</u>

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The situation escalated when one of the students pulled the fire alarm causing the whole site to evacuate. Students from the rest of the school while initially being interested in what the alarm was for, quickly became annoyed at the disruption to their learning that these students were causing, and a number of them were also very annoyed at the extra work they were causing the staff. Staff worked efficiently to calmly support all the students and defuse the situation and work with some of the upset students who wanted to inflict physical retribution on those who had disturbed their learning.

This school also had a number of role models in the community that they used to help inspire and support the students at school. One class that I was invited to observe, was a judo class taken with a number of boys in a small room. The teacher had worked with one of the top judo instructors in the UK and he had worked with the boys in the past to support them in their technique as well as inspiring them with his story of struggling to read and write at school and how he overcame that to represent Great Britain at the Olympics. The boys had pride in what they were doing, as they could see their physical skills improving and they were proud that they were helping their teacher train for an upcoming international competition.

Digital Tools

The sites I visited had a number of barriers towards using digital tools to support students. Mostly sites had a single interactive whiteboard at the head of the class, while some of the schools had a group of chromebooks that could be shared around the school. As Tokoiti School has one to one devices for every student provided by the Board, I was able to share our journey with the digital devices and the systems we use to support students.

A variety of tools were being used to record incidents with the teams on each site reviewing them. Google Apps for Education was not being used across the sites and access to technology and knowledge was identified as a barrier to being able to more efficiently record the incidents.

Routines

Another site I visited spoke of ruthless consistency. They had routines that were carried out without fail every day. One of the first things that every student had to do each morning was to greet their teacher by shaking their hand before they entered the classroom. Teachers were required to be at their doorways and to greet every student role modelling positive interactions with them. It was also a time to have the first connection of the day with each student so that the teacher could check in with them. This routine placed the needs of the students above the caregivers as the teacher was required to give them attention first, and any discussion between teachers and caregivers was interrupted by a student coming to greet the teacher.

The students that I spoke to regarded this process as important as it made them feel valued. Caregivers I spoke to saw the value in this routine and then adjusted their daily routines so that it did not impact on this starting of the day. For instance, a number of caregivers talked about how in the past they would go to the classroom to talk to the teacher about minor issues at the start of the day, and now they leave these with the administration staff to pass on, or talk to the Head Teacher rather than interrupt the morning routine. They likened this to the student arriving home from school at the end of the day and how they were able to connect with their child about their day and how they could solve issues that would otherwise fester if they did not make time to listen to their child after school. By seeing the connection of this, they were understanding of the routine at the beginning of the day.

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One Head Teacher spoke of the importance of the school lunches and the power that it had on being able to manage behaviour and support students. His staff used this time to eat with the students, role modelling conversation and dining etiquette. The Head Teacher had made the change in the school from plastic cutlery and trays to porcelain plates and metal cutlery. He saw benefits in the students feeling like that were respected and trusted to use proper plates and cutlery. He noticed a greater uptake in students using school dinners after this was implemented. Another change he made was to the school dinners having a variety of options for the students to choose from. The dinners at the school were delicious and rivaled a pub meal in New Zealand. The interactions of the staff during lunch reinforced the connections that they had with students, with staff taking the opportunity to connect with a wide range of other students in the school.

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This school was introducing a school dog for the first time when I arrived. This was a great opportunity for discussion on the benefits and the issues that arise around having a school pet as I had introduced a school dog to Tokoiti School in 2013. The benefits of having an animal at school are numerous and can often support the managing of behaviour.

Smaller schools in the village that I observed still dwarfed our school with over 100 students being at the smallest school in the village. In these schools the connection between the teachers, students and the caregivers was highly valued. One school felt that the fostering of belonging was a huge influence on the students at their school. A number of caregivers felt disconnected from the community and the school was the local connecting point and was building the relationships between them. The school encouraged the students to create signs and advertisements for their school and community. Slogans that were student created were highly visible throughout the entire site and were posted in public spaces around the village. The students were very quick to point out their creations and to espouse the values that the school had. The Head Teacher spoke of having high expectations and marking the moments with students who went over and above the minimum standard. Those who did what was expected, for example picked up rubbish they had dropped, were met with a simple thank you rather than any other reward. This he pointed out, had the benefit of the students striving to met his high expectations instead of expecting a reward for doing the bare minimum.

MAPA Concepts in Action

Many of the sites had been involved with a variety of different training around managing behaviour. MAPA was chosen by schools for a number of different reasons, some schools highlighted the ability to meet the needs of a wide range of learners, the comprehensive workbook was another valuable resource as was the testing and refreshing of the skills. Staff involved in the foundation level of MAPA reported greater confidence in their understanding and the management of situations that they faced. One of the recurring themes was the priority of care, welfare, safety and security of all the participants in an incident and this was also paramount with the MAPA training.

Trainers that I spoke with talked about how they had evidence of the reduction of risky or dangerous behaviour due to the skills that the staff were using to de-escalate situations, without damaging the professional and supportive relationships that were critical to the settings.

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The trainers at the sites appreciated that they had a number of colleagues trained to the same instructor level as they were. This allowed them to form effective teams for the monitoring of individual student incidents and to support a restraint free environment. The continuous revisiting of the core principles of the MAPA Foundation skills also, was an important factor as was the consistency of the training and the resources that supported the trainers.

There was also a variety of views around the training of staff. MAPA foundation skills training allows for the trainer to skip the holding skills training and certify staff in the rest of the programme. A full programme consists of 10 units taught over two days - 13 hours. Some trainers were of the opinion that training staff in just the disengagement skills would be sufficient unless there was a specific need for the holding skills to be taught. Others viewed the whole foundation skills as critical to be taught in their entirety, as staff who had the full training were more confident in managing a wide range of situations. All trainers emphasised the importance of the ongoing training, not only the yearly requirement to be refreshed, but ongoing site skills and knowledge refreshers. By having on site trainers the sites were able to keep a continuous training schedule.

The sites that I visited had mixed experiences of previous secondary response systems, but all were satisfied with the MAPA programme, with some of the trainers building their skills up to the advanced training to meet the specific needs of their site.

All the sites reported a reduction in incidents since implementing MAPA and were looking at other supports for the primary interventions.

One school had fully implemented the Pivotal Approach to behaviour management, with 5 pillars underlying their philosophy and with all staff that I spoke to being able to articulate them as

- 1. Manage your own behaviour
- 2. Focus on the 95% of learners first
- 3. Teach routines relentlessly
- 4. Use scripted interventions
- 5. Restorative Approach

Staff were aware of their responsibility to be the role model with reminders around of the 3Bs (Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe) and the 3Ps (Posture, Presentation, Participation). This school also had the start of day routine with greeting each student with a handshake and a smile. Students lined up silently and entered classrooms standing behind their chair and waited to be asked by the teacher to sit down.

Scripted interventions gave teachers a formula when dealing with disruptive behaviours with clear guidelines. One of the first scripted interventions was the 30 second intervention, which allowed the teacher to quickly address the behaviour and move on.

The school also planned support for the 5% with alternative play provisions (Lunch Club) providing safe, organised and structured environment for those who found the playground challenging for a number of reasons. A series of poor choices in the playground may prompt an invitation for the student to attend Lunch Club. This enables the student to experience feeling of success where hitherto it has only been

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negative. The school had noted a 77% decrease in playground incidents across the school, with all the students involved in the Lunch Club being successfully reintegrated back into the playground. The students reported feeling positive about the experience and teachers reported that they were demonstrating an improvement in social skills and behaviour both in the classroom and in the playground.

The school had a very large student population, but due to it being located in central London, space for the students to play in the breaks were very limited. The school overcame this by having multiple breaks rolling for the different year levels. Again the routines that had been put in place helped managed the transitions to and from the playground. At the end of the break, a teacher would put up their hand, and all the staff and students would stop and do the same. Wordlessly the teacher would lower their arm and silently all the teachers and students moved quickly to line up with their classroom. When all the classes were ready, the lead teacher would clap once and silently the classes would return back inside. This routine allowed for large groups to move around the school without disturbing others, and very quickly ended the break, taking less than 60 seconds for the whole process to be completed with over 100 students.

Another strategy the school used was Plug-In Learning. The school had collected data that playground issues had a particularly negative impact on learning in the afternoons. Plug-In Learning involved identified students, on a rotational basis, access to a range of short activities including structured physical training, interactive learning on Chromebooks, pastoral conversations and structured learning tasks. This allowed other students to continue their learning uninterrupted by disruptive behaviour. The school reported less parental complaints, students being happier and the classrooms becoming a calmer and safer environment.

Ministry of Education Training in New Zealand

In the Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Physical Restraint⁵ on page 13 it notes:

"When a Ministry Learning Support Practitioner is part of the team supporting the student the team will be taught how to safely restrain the student, in situations when preventative and de-escalation strategies have not been effective, and physical restraint is part of an Individual Behaviour Plan." This was implemented in August 2017 and the information from the Ministry shows that they have limited capacity to train and support staff.

The Ministry refused the request for the number of school staff trained by MAPA-trained Learning Support Practitioners as *"the Ministry does not hold this information. This is held at individual schools."* Part of the requirements of a MAPA instructor is the requirement to log training and provide the participants with the MAPA Blue Card, therefore the Ministry should be able to request that information from their instructors.

In some case that this author has reviewed, anecdotal evidence is that the Ministry, although training staff in MAPA physical intervention skills, MAPA materials are not being used, training has not been logged and participants have not been issued a Blue Card.

⁵ (n.d.). Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Retrieved October 19, 2018, from https://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/School/Managing-and-supporting-students/Guidance-for-New-Z ealand-Schools-on-Behaviour-Mgmt-to-Minimise-Physical-....pdf

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Percentage of Learning Support Practitioners able to instruct staff in safe restraints ⁶		
Region	As at 15 August 2017 (date of Rules publication)	As at 15 August 2018
Auckland	1.62%	3.28%
Bay of Plenty/Waiariki	4.60%	7.61%
Canterbury	4.27%	7.50%
Hawkes Bay/Tairāwhiti	7.14%	10.53%
Nelson/Marlborough/West Coast	9.38%	9.68%
Otago/Southland	3.39%	8.47%
Tai Tokerau	2.38%	9.52%
Taranaki/Wanganui/Manawatu	4.00%	5.56%
Waikato	5.63%	7.50%
Wellington	3.77%	4.59%
North Island Total	3.51%	5.65%
South Island Total	4.81%	8.10%
New Zealand Total	3.81%	6.20%

CPI's response to this situation is "We would never advocate the physical skills being taught on their own – the only time this might happen would be if the non-physical elements had been previously taught and the physical elements were a 'top-up' or 'add-on' – in any case we would expect the appropriate materials to be used, a blue card to be issued and the training to be logged on our web-site. Otherwise there is no audit trail of the training – if either the teacher or the pupil had been injured in this incident we (CPI) would be unable to provide any support to the CI or the teacher and there is reputational risk to both us and the Ministry through inappropriate training (regardless of whether the restraint used was appropriate)".

This situation puts the school, the Ministry and CPI at risk and dilutes the work of instructors in other contexts. Schools thinking that they are providing suitable support and training may find that this is not the case and schools receiving MAPA instruction need to ensure that their staff receive a CPI MAPA workbook, a Blue Card and certificates that indicate that the training has been logged.

⁶ (2018, August 20). Learning Support Practitioners able to instruct others in ... - FYI.org.nz. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from

https://fyi.org.nz/request/8532-learning-support-practitioners-able-to-instruct-others-in-safe-restraint the support-practitioners-able-to-instruct-others-in-safe-restraint the support-practitioners-able-to-instruct-others-instruct-others-instruct-others-instruct-others-instr

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Conclusion

MAPA Foundation skills are best practice across a wide range of contexts and are established worldwide. School Boards that choose this training for their staff can be assured that the programme meets the needs to ensure teachers and authorised staff members are suitably supported and trained, when the training is delivered using CPI materials, training is logged in the CPI training database and staff are issued with a Blue Card.

Continuous training needs to be planned for and regularly reviewing the skills are important for the practices to become embedded schoolwide.

As part of a Community of Learning (COL), our school has made a commitment to use the same tools, with Google Apps for Education being our base tool. This allows for sharing across the different sites in our COL and we are looking at ways that we can share the data. Although the new Ministry rules around the sharing of Learning Support information, with written parental permission being required, is becoming a barrier to this information being used⁷ (this has been removed and is currently being revised as of July 2018).

Another benefit of being part of the COL is that the partners in the community can dedicate staff towards different areas of expertise to grow the strength across the whole community. While being a MAPA instructor in a small school is extra cost, the benefit to the COL, the school and the quality of the training maximises the costs and makes good sense. The Board can be assured that the training provided by the instructor is audited and the staff have the skills to manage a wide range of situations with the best possible Care, Welfare, Safety and Security for everyone.

Tokoiti School has obtained extra funding for ILE and we are looking at implementing some of the ideas that I have observed at different sites. Having space that student can select to go to when they are feeling overwhelmed with the ability to have pastoral conversations in a safe environment will be an asset. Plug-In Learning is something that we have been using as well as Lunch Club. Our difficulties is staffing this at a small school, but with a combined team approach we are able to manage it. Relentless routines are difficult to master in a small school where one staff member being away may represent half the teaching staff on a particular day, but the school is working towards solutions by having whole school routines that can be run by any member of staff.

Recommendation

The Ministry of Education MAPA training should use CPI resources, train using the CPI model, issue the Blue Card and log training into the training database to assure schools and teachers of the quality of the training and to ensure CPI support if there are any complaints using these skills.

⁷ (n.d.). Sharing personal information in Communities of Learning | Kāhui Ako Retrieved February 28, 2018, from <u>https://www.education.govt.nz/communities-of-learning/kahui-ako-info-sharing/</u>

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Readings and References

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- When the Adults Change, Everything Changes¹¹
- Learning Support Practitioners able to instruct others in safe restraint¹²
- Sharing personal information in Communities of Learning¹³
- Education and Inspections Act 2006¹⁴
- Use of reasonable force in schools¹⁵
- Education Act 1989¹⁶
- Guidelines for Registered Schools in New Zealand on the Use of Physical Restraint August 2017¹⁷

• Teachers, principals worried about restraint rules¹⁸

School

- Kids left to trash school property: Hipkins says restraint balance 'not quite right¹⁹
- Physical Restraint Rules Remove Common Sense & Safety²⁰
- PPTA Restraint Guidelines September 2017 21
- What is physical restraint? RTLB: TKI²²
- Restraint case highlights pressure on schools - NZEI Te Riu Roa²³
- Guidelines for the surrender and retention of property and searches²⁴
- Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy January 2017²⁵
- Qualified teacher status (QTS) Gov.uk²⁶
- Behaviour Policy September 2017/18²⁷

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