Physical Abuse

Physical abuse includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, restraint, and misuse of medication. It might also involve improper use of sanctions, particularly those that involve physical restraint.

Spot the Signs of Physical Abuse

There are a number of physical signs to look out for:

- Cuts
- Bruises
- Burns
- Restraint or grip markings
- Black eyes
- Unusual behaviour, such as repeated trips to the hospital

Many victims of physical abuse may feel responsible for their abuse. Or they may fear the shame of discovery, or further attacks from their abuser. As such, they may attempt to cover up the marks left by the abuse. So you should also be on the lookout for signs that the person has something they're trying to hide. For example, they may wear more makeup than usual to cover a bruise. Or they may take to wearing long-sleeved tops, even in warm weather.

Warning Signs of a Culture of Abuse

Sometimes, the behaviour of others may indicate that physical abuse is taking place. Here are a few warning signs:

- Name-calling, put-downs, aggressive behaviour and threats
- Restricted movements (for instance, the abuser may prevent them from attending work or school)
- Restricted access to money
- An attitude of overt jealousy or possessiveness
- A delay between the time of injury and the seeking of treatment

Support Services:

- If someone is in immediate danger call the Police on 999.
- To make a safeguarding referral visit: Report abuse/neglect of a vulnerable adult or contact the Community Adult Front Door on 01942 828777.

Physical Abuse

What is Physical Abuse?

Physical abuse is the intentional use of force against another person that results in harm, injury, or trauma to their body.

Key Characteristics

- Assault, hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, pushing
- Rough handling
- Scalding and burning
- Physical punishments
- Inappropriate or unlawful use of restraint

Signs of Physical Abuse

- No explanation for injuries
- Bruising, cuts, burns or marks on the body
- Frequent injuries
- Unexplained falls
- Subdued or changed behaviour in the presence of a particular person
- Signs of malnutrition
- Injuries that are inconsistent with the person's lifestyle

Legal Framework

- The Care Act 2014