



Physical Restraint Policy

Wordsworth Primary and Nusery School

Approved by: Governors

Date:

Last reviewed on: July 2024

Next review due by: July 2025

Definitions

Physical Intervention is **any** method of physically intervening to resolve a difficult or dangerous Situation. This is not necessarily a physical restraint.

Restrictive physical Intervention (also known as Physical Restraint) is defined as when a member of staff uses reasonable force with the intention of restricting a young person's movement against their will.

LA guidelines on Physical Restraint state "Restraint occurs when a member of staff uses physical force intentionally to restrict a child's movement, against his or her will. It should rarely be used". The use of force can only be regarded as reasonable if the circumstances of the incident warrant it.

Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

Considerations

Wordsworth Primary and Nursery believe that physical restraint should be avoided wherever possible and only ever used when all other strategies have not resolved the difficult or dangerous incident. Any physical restraint will be reasonable and proportionate.

We will always attempt other strategies such as distraction before the use of any Physical Intervention or Physical Restraint.

Staff will assess the risk and make a judgment based on whether an intervention will increase disruption or provoke an attack. Assessments will also take into consideration any potential risk of injury to both staff and pupils.

Physical force will never be used instead of positive behaviour management.

When applying disciplinary measures such as restraint or isolation in response to incidents involving children with SEN and disabilities, we would consider the risks carefully considering the additional vulnerability of the child/group.

We are aware the use of restraint is likely to impact on the well-being of the child, therefore guidance from used of reasonable force in schools is referred to and external agencies are contacted for support. Pastoral support will be sought for children and family and meetings will be held with SLT and inclusions.

Who can use restraint?

Everyone has the right to use reasonable force to prevent an attack against themselves or others if the use of restraint is necessary, reasonable and proportionate. Staff can use physical intervention under other circumstances but should not use restraint unless they are trained in the techniques.

These arrangements apply at all times when the school has responsibility for pupils and extend to times when pupils are at after-school clubs and are off-site on educational trips.

The policy does not apply to situations after children have been dismissed at the end of the school day and left the school site.

A teacher should not intervene if he or she believes they may be at risk of injury. In these circumstances the teacher should remove other pupils who might be at risk and gain assistance from a colleague or colleagues. Designated staff trained in Team Teach will be called to restrain a child should it be reasonable to do so. Until assistance arrives the teacher should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally (if possible) and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

Types of incidents

There is a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a pupil.

They will fall into three broad categories: -

- Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
- Where there is a developing risk of injury
- Where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline

Examples of situations that fall within one of the first two categories are: -

- A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- Pupils are fighting
- A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (N.B. this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school)

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- A pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom
- A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson
- Physical Intervention/Restraint – Reasonable force
- Acceptable physical intervention or restraint can take a number of forms, namely: -
- Intervention:
- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Restraint: Holding, Pushing, Pulling, Leading a pupil by hand or arm
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- In extreme circumstances using more restrictive holds.
- Containing a pupil in a confined space
- Unreasonable force

- Staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, namely:-
- Holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe
- Slapping, punching or kicking a pupil
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping a pupil
- Holding or pulling a pupil by the hair
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground

Staff should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might compromise their privacy and dignity.

Practical Strategies

- Before intervening physically, staff should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and make it clear what will happen if he or she does not.
- Communication must continue with the pupil throughout the incident, and it should be made clear to the pupil that contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
- A calm and measured approach to the situation is always needed. Members of staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger, or frustration.
- Members of staff will not punish the pupil with physical injury or cause humiliation.

Practical Responses

DO:

- Remain controlled
- Talk clearly and give clear instructions
- Reduce language overload using 'W.I.N.E' when appropriate
- If a child needs to be removed from a classroom, move with the child towards the classroom entrance, or if outside towards the main office area
- Request help and tell the pupil you are requesting help
- Remove other people if they are in danger
- Remove potential weapons
- Assume that the child is going to calm down

DON'T:

- Use confrontational body language
- Engage in prolonged or exaggerated eye contact
- Use confrontational language, e.g. “stop being childish”
- Use physical intervention unless other non-physical methods of calming have been tried.

After an incident of restraint

The Head Teacher must be notified as soon as possible about any incident in which physical force is used to control or restrain a pupil.

All incidents (unless trivial) should be recorded on the Physical Restraint Incident Form which is available from the Hamwic website:

<https://incidents.hamwic.org>

Staff involved should keep their own copies of these reports.

It is our policy to inform parents of any incidents on the same day, preferably by telephone. Parents will be encouraged to discuss ongoing concerns with the Head Teacher. Incidents will be reviewed to minimise the possibility of restraint being needed in the future.

The pupil will be reinstated in the classroom as soon as it is prudent to do so. Police will be informed at the Head Teacher's discretion.

Consistent with the principles of the Children's Act 1989, pupils who have been restrained are entitled to record their views, after they have calmed down.

Appropriate staff will be on hand to support the pupils and also help counsel pupils who have been involved through witnessing an incident of restraint.

Southampton City Council will provide support and counselling for staff who wish to receive independent support.

Any injuries sustained by staff should be recorded separately in accordance with Health and Safety procedures.

Children who may necessitate restraint

Where it is known that a pupil may need to be restrained a plan will be prepared to minimise the risk of such an occurrence and to manage it effectively should the situation arise.

Restraint of a pupil should be viewed in relation to ongoing plans to improve the pupil's behaviour and will be linked to targets identified on the child's IEP or Challenging Behaviour Plan.

Parents, pupil and the Head Teacher will be involved with this process, including sharing of the CB Plan and risk assessment as well as fully briefing all staff.

Physical Contact

Physical contact may be necessary to demonstrate exercises or techniques during P.E. lessons, sports coaching or if a member of staff has to give first aid.

Touching may also be appropriate where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting.

Staff need to use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support and should not be inhibited from providing such contact when it is professionally appropriate to do so.

However, there are certain situations where touch is never appropriate. There are also a few children for whom touch is unlikely ever to be acceptable e.g. as a consequence of their cultural individual sensitivities or previous experience of abuse. This will be shared with staff via the individual pupil profile.

Staff will be advised about any children to whom this may apply.

Complaints

Should parents have ongoing concerns after an incident they should be encouraged to discuss the situation with the Head of School and, if necessary, use the school's complaints procedure.