



Physical Intervention Policy

1 Background

Restrictive physical intervention is defined as follows:

Restrictive physical intervention is when a member of staff uses force intentionally to restrict a child's movement against his or her will.

All staff within this setting aim to help children take responsibility for their own behaviour. Staff do this through a combination of approaches, which include

- positive role modelling
- teaching an interesting and challenging curriculum
- setting and enforcing appropriate boundaries and expectations
- and providing supportive feedback.

More details about this and the school's general approach to promoting positive behaviour can be found in the behaviour policy.

There are times when children's behaviour presents particular challenges that may require restrictive physical intervention. This policy sets out the expectations for the use of such intervention. It is not intended to refer to the general use of physical contact which might be appropriate in a range of situations, such as:

- giving physical guidance to children (for example in practical activities and PE)
- providing emotional support when a child is distressed
- providing physical care (such as first aid or toileting).

This policy is consistent with the Child Protection, Diversity and Equal Opportunities policies, and with national and local guidance for schools on safeguarding children. Staff must exercise appropriate care when using physical contact (there is further guidance in our Child Protection policy); there are some children for whom physical contact would be inappropriate (such as those with a history of physical or sexual abuse, or those from certain cultural/religious groups). Staff must pay careful attention to issues of gender and privacy, and to any specific requirements of certain cultural/religious groups.

Principles for the use of restrictive physical intervention

2.1 In the context of positive approaches

Staff should only use restrictive physical intervention where the risks involved in using force are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force. It is not the preferred way of managing children's behaviour. Restrictive physical intervention may be used only in the context of a well established and well implemented positive behaviour management framework with the exception of emergency situations. The approach to promoting positive behaviour is in the Behaviour Policy. Staff will aim to do all they can in order to avoid using restrictive physical intervention. Staff should only use

restrictive physical intervention where they judge that there is no reasonably practicable less intrusive alternative. However, there may be rare situations of such concern where they judge that they would need to use restrictive physical intervention immediately. They should use restrictive physical intervention at the same time as using other approaches, such as saying, "Stop!" and giving a warning of what might happen next. Safety is always a paramount concern and staff are not advised to use restrictive physical intervention if it is likely to put themselves at risk.

2.2 Duty of care

All staff have a duty of care towards the children in the setting. This duty of care applies as much to what staff *don't* do as what staff *do* do. When children are in danger of hurting themselves or others, or of causing significant damage to property, staff have a responsibility to intervene. In most cases, this involves an attempt to divert the child to another activity or a simple instruction to "Stop!" along with a warning of what might happen next. However, if staff judge that it is necessary, they may use restrictive physical intervention.

2.3 Reasonable force

When staff need to use restrictive physical intervention, they should use it within the principle of reasonable force. This means using an amount of force in proportion to the circumstances. Staff must use as little force as is necessary in order to maintain safety, and use this for as short a period as possible.

3 When can restrictive physical intervention be used?

The use of restrictive physical intervention may be justified where a pupil is:

1. committing an offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil)
2. causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil themselves); or
3. prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Restrictive physical intervention may also be appropriate where, although none of the above have yet happened, they are judged as highly likely to be about to happen.

Staff must be very cautious about using restrictive physical intervention where there are no immediate concerns about possible injury or exceptional damage to property. Restrictive physical intervention would only be used in exceptional circumstances, with staff that know the student well and who are able to make informed judgements about the relative risks of using, or not using, restrictive physical intervention; for example stopping a younger child leaving the school site.

The main aim of restrictive physical intervention is usually to maintain or restore safety. It is acknowledged that there may be times when restrictive physical intervention may be justified as a reasonable and proportional response to prevent damage to property or to maintain good order and discipline at the school. However, staff must be particularly careful to consider all other options available before using restrictive physical intervention to achieve either of these goals. In all cases, staff must remember that, even if the aim is to re-establish good order, restrictive physical intervention may actually escalate the difficulty.

If staff judge that restrictive physical intervention would make the situation worse, they should not use it, but should do something else (like go to seek help, make the area safe, remove other children from the area or warn about what might happen next and issue an instruction to stop) consistent with the school's duty of care. The duty of care means that staff might use a restrictive physical intervention if a child is trying to leave the site and it is judged that they would be at unacceptable risk. This duty of care also extends beyond the site boundaries: there may also be situations where staff need to use restrictive physical intervention when they have charge of children off site (e.g. on trips). Staff must never use restrictive physical intervention out of anger or as a punishment.

4 Who can use restrictive physical intervention

If the use of restrictive physical intervention is appropriate, and is part of a positive behaviour management framework, a member of staff who knows the child well should be involved, and where possible, BILD accredited (Team Teach) in the use of restrictive physical intervention .

However, in an emergency, any of the following may be able to use reasonable force:

1. any teacher who works at the school, and
2. any other person whom the headteacher has authorised to have control or charge of pupils, including:
 - (a) support staff whose job normally includes supervising pupils such as teaching assistants, learning support assistants, learning mentors and lunchtime supervisors; and
 - (b) people to whom the headteacher has given temporary authorisation to have control or charge of pupils such as paid members of staff whose job does not normally involve supervising pupils (for example catering or premises-related staff) and unpaid volunteers (for example parents accompanying pupils on school organised visits) but not other children.

5 Planning around an individual and risk assessment

In an emergency, staff do their best, using reasonable force within their duty of care. Where an individual child has an individual positive behaviour management plan, which includes the use of restrictive physical intervention, the school must ensure that such staff receive appropriate training and support in behaviour management as well as restrictive physical intervention. The school considers staff and children's physical and emotional health when they make these plans and consult with the child's parents/guardians.

In most situations, the use of restrictive physical intervention is in the context of a prior risk assessment which considers:

What the risks are

Who is at risk and how

What can be done to manage the risk (this may include the possible use of restrictive physical intervention)

Staff use this risk assessment to inform the individual behaviour plan that is developed to support the child. If this behaviour plan includes restrictive physical intervention it

will be as just one part of a whole approach to supporting the child's behaviour. The behaviour plan outlines:

- The school's understanding of what the child is trying to achieve or communicate through his/her behaviour
- How the school has adapted the environment to better meet the child's needs
- How the school teaches and encourages the child to use new, more appropriate behaviours
- How the school rewards the child when he or she makes progress
- How the school responds when the child's behaviour is challenging (responsive strategies).

Staff must pay particular attention to responsive strategies. Staff must use a range of approaches (including humour, change of face, distraction, relocation, and offering choices) as direct alternatives to using restrictive physical intervention. Staff must choose these responsive strategies in the light of the risk assessment. Staff must draw from as many different viewpoints as possible when they anticipate that an individual child's behaviour may require some form of restrictive physical intervention. In particular, they include the child's perspective. Staff must also involve the child's parents (or those with parental responsibility), staff from the school who work with the child, and any visiting support staff (such as Educational Psychologists, Behaviour Support Team workers, Speech and Language Therapists, Social Workers and colleagues from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

Staff should record the outcome from these planning meetings and seek parental meetings to confirm their knowledge of the planned approach. Staff must review these plans at least once every 4 to 6 months, or more frequently if there are any concerns about the nature or frequency of the use of restrictive physical intervention or where there are any major changes to the child's circumstances.

The school recognises that there may be some children within the school who find physical contact in general particularly unwelcome as a consequence of their culture/religious group or disability. There may be others for whom such contact is troubling as a result of their personal history, in particular of abuse. The school must have systems to alert staff discreetly to such issues so that they can plan accordingly to meet individual children's needs.

6 What type of restrictive physical intervention can be used

Any use of restrictive physical intervention by staff should be consistent with the principle of reasonable force. In all cases, staff should be guided in their choices of action by the principles in section 2 above. Staff should not act in ways that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- Holding a child around the neck or collar or in any other way that might restrict the child's ability to breathe
- Slapping, punching or kicking a child
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping a child
- Holding a child by the hair or ear

Such actions would normally be considered inappropriate. The school does not plan for and does not allow, except in emergency situations, staff to use seclusion. Seclusion is where a young person is forced to spend time alone in a confined space against their will. Staff may, however, use withdrawal or time-out in a planned way. The school defines these as follows:

Withdrawal involves taking a young person, with their agreement, away from a situation that has caused anxiety or distress, to a place where they can be observed continuously and supported until they are ready to resume their usual activities.

Time-out is where a response to a young person's inappropriate behaviour includes a specific period of time with no positive reinforcement as part of an overall intervention plan.

Where staff need specific training in the use of restrictive physical intervention, the school will arrange that they should receive Team Teach training, through Hampshire County Council. This training is accredited through the national accreditation system set up by BILD (British Institute of Learning Disabilities). The school will ensure that staff have access to appropriate refresher training.

Further, we actively work to ensure general training is accessed by our staff in the following areas:

- relating to legal issues policy and risk assessment
- in addition to behaviour management strategies such as positive approaches to behaviour management
- de-escalation techniques and managing

A record of such training is kept and monitored.

7 Recording and reporting

The school records any use of restrictive physical intervention using the record sheet in the Hampshire *Planning and recording Physical Interventions in schools booklet*. The school will do this as soon as possible and in any event within 24 hours of the incident. A copy of the front page of this incident form is sent to the Children's Services Department, within one week of the incident to allow for the analysis of the use of restrictive physical intervention across the county. According to the nature of the incident, the school may also note it in other records, such as the accident book, violent incident records or child tracking sheets which are also kept in head teacher's/ school office and shared with appropriate Children's Services Department, e.g. Health and Safety. Further, the governing body ensures that procedures are in place for recording significant incidents and then reporting these incidents as soon as possible to pupil's parents.

After using restrictive physical intervention, staff must ensure that the headteacher is informed as soon as possible. Staff must also inform EACH parent by phone (or by letter or note home with the child if this is not possible). A copy of the record form is also available for parents to read. In rare cases, the school might need to inform the

police, such as in incidents that involve the possession of weapons. This would be in line with the general practice, informed by the joint DfEE/Home Office (1999) publication *School Security: Dealing with trouble makers - protecting pupils and staff* and Section 45 of the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006.

The Headteacher reports any incidents which required physical intervention in the termly HT report to Governors.

8 Supporting and reviewing

The school recognises that it is distressing to be involved in a physical intervention, whether as the child being held, the person doing the holding, or someone observing or hearing about what has happened. After a restrictive physical intervention, staff will give support to the child so that they can understand why it was necessary. Where staff can, they will record how the child felt about this. Where it is appropriate, staff will have the same sort of conversations with other children who observed what happened. In all cases, staff will wait until the child has calmed down enough to be able to talk productively and learn from this conversation. If necessary, the child will be asked whether he or she has been injured so that appropriate first aid can be given. This also gives the child an opportunity to say whether anything inappropriate has happened in connection with the incident.

The school will also support adults who were involved, either actively or as observers, by giving them the chance to talk through what has happened with the most appropriate person from the staff team. We use the guidance in the Hampshire document *Planning and recording physical intervention in schools* (2010).

A key aim of the after-incident support is to repair any potential strain to the relationship between the child and the people that were involved in the restrictive physical intervention. After a restrictive physical intervention, the school will consider whether the individual behaviour plan needs to be reviewed so that the school can reduce the risk of needing to use restrictive physical intervention again.

9 Monitoring

The headteacher will monitor the use of restrictive physical intervention in the school. The head teacher, deputy head teacher and SENCO are responsible for reviewing the records on a termly basis, and more often if the need arises, so that appropriate action can be taken. This is reported to Governors in the termly head teacher's report. The information is also used by the governing body when this policy and related policies are reviewed. The analysis considers equalities issues such as age, gender, disability, culture and religion issues in order to make sure that there is no potential discrimination; It will also consider potential child protection issues. The school will look for any trends in the relative use of restrictive physical intervention across different staff members and across different times of day or settings. The aims are to protect children, to avoid discrimination and to develop our ability to meet the needs of children without using restrictive physical intervention. This analysis is reported back to the governing body so that appropriate further action can be taken and monitored.

10 Concerns and complaints

The use of restrictive physical intervention is distressing to all involved and can lead to concerns, allegations or complaints of inappropriate or excessive use. In particular, a child might complain about the use of restrictive physical intervention in the heat of the moment but on further reflection might better understand why it happened. In other situations, further reflection might lead the child to feel strongly that the use of restrictive physical intervention was inappropriate. This is why staff must be careful to ensure all children have a chance to review the incident after they have calmed down.

If a child or parent has a concern about the way restrictive physical intervention has been used, the school's complaints procedure explains how to take the matter further and how long it will take to respond to these concerns. Where there is an allegation of assault or abusive behaviour, the head teacher is immediately informed. The school will also follow the school's child protection procedures. In the absence of the head teacher, in relation to restrictive physical intervention, the deputy head teacher is informed. If the concern, complaint or allegation concerns the head teacher, the Chair of Governors is informed. If parents/carers are not satisfied with the way the complaint has been handled, they have the right to take the matter further as set out in the complaints procedure. The results and procedures used in dealing with complaints are monitored by the governing body.

11 Reviewing this policy

Reviewed May 2021

Next Review: May 2024 (and following an incident where physical intervention is used)