

WHITEFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Physical Interventions Policy



Adopted: October 2014

Review date: October 2015

Whitefield Primary School

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Mission Statement

Our school is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected. We believe that all children should be able to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusion place where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring and fun environment. We all work for our school to be a happy place where good behaviour is expected and all children enjoy their educational journey.

At Whitefield we believe in nothing but the best!

This policy should be applied in conjunction with the school behaviour policy, the school child protection policy and school based training in both.

Whitefield primary school is committed to safeguarding all pupils and treating them with respect and dignity. This policy adheres to the national 'Use of reasonable force guidance for school leaders, staff and governing bodies' produced by the Department for Education. Staff are also expected to fully comply with the 'safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people' 2009.

Principles

- *The use of force should, wherever possible, be avoided*
- *There are occasions when the use of force is appropriate*
- *When force is necessary, it must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.*

DfES Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to clarify for staff exactly the circumstances when physical intervention is appropriate and provide guidance as to how this should be carried out.

Definitions

Physical intervention

- Physical intervention is a form of physical contact in which one person imposes will upon another often by the use of superior physical strength.
- Physical intervention is sometimes referred to as restraint which correctly suggests it will most often be a case of holding a child back from danger rather than more intrusive intervention.
- ***It is not a form of corporal punishment which is illegal in maintained schools in any circumstances***, nor should it be confused with other means of influencing pupils' behaviour through physical contact, such as the use of physical prompts to assist a child in acquiring particular motor or other skills.

Reasonable force

- Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 'Reasonable force' means using no more force than is needed.
- Force can be used to control or restrain pupils.
 - a) Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
 - b) Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more ***extreme circumstances***, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention. Restraint should only be used as a last resort in extreme circumstances in order to prevent serious physical injury to pupils or staff.

Who can apply physical intervention?

Section 500a of the 1996 Education Act gives the head teacher discretion to authorise staff and others to use 'reasonable force' in applying physical intervention strategies. At Whitefield Primary School, all staff employed by the school are authorised to use physical intervention according to the criteria set out in this policy. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

Students and voluntary helpers to school are also authorised to use force but only when there is an immediate safety risk e.g. holding a child back because of danger from a road.

Where physical intervention can be used

Staff can use physical intervention whenever they are on school premises and in charge of pupils and on other occasions when they have lawful control of pupils on behalf of the school, such as on school trips or other recognised out of school activities.

When the use of physical intervention is appropriate

Apart from where there is a very clear issue of immediate safety, physical intervention should be the last resort and the usual methods of control as outlined in the school behaviour policy and the appendix to that policy should be used first.

Following this, physical intervention can be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing what would be a criminal offence if the pupil was the age of criminal responsibility;
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing significant damage to property;
- repeated refusal to leave the room when requested after causing significant disruption to other children's learning

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in *loco parentis* and should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and well being. Failure to physically intervene with a pupil who is likely to cause injury to themselves or others may constitute a breach of 'duty of care' towards the pupils. At the same time staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

How to apply physical intervention

Staff are only authorised to use **reasonable** force in applying physical intervention which means that only the force necessary to stop or to prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

Team Teach training was delivered to all staff on 31st October 2011 and the Team Teach handbook was also distributed to all staff in attendance. The training was delivered in order to equip staff with the correct techniques to use in a range of circumstances with the strict purpose of ensuring pupil safety and personal safety in such circumstances requiring force.

Physical intervention should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment or a way of humiliating a child.

If it is necessary to apply physical intervention:

DO

- Try all other strategies first in a non-urgent situation
- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the physical intervention in simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your physical intervention in response to the pupil's compliance

DO NOT

- Act in temper (refer to another member of staff if you have lost control of your emotions)
- Act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury to the pupil.
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the physical intervention
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck or restricting arms across the chest.
- Slap, punch, trip or kick the pupil
- Use any of the restraint techniques which pose an unacceptable risk to the pupil (detailed below)
- Touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.

Restraint techniques which pose an unacceptable risk to pupils and should never be used include;

- the 'seated double embrace' which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing;
- the 'double basket-hold' which involves holding a person's arms across their chest; and
- the 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.

Actions after an incident

1. Any immediate medical checks to take place and basic needs of the pupil and member of staff should be met.
2. A member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) should be informed immediately.

3. All details of the incident will be recorded using the 'significant incident involving use of force record' (appendix 1). The incident will also be recorded in the central log.
4. The incident will be reported to parents/carers by a member of the SLT.
5. The incident will be reported to the Governing Body and the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) as necessary.
6. A risk assessment and behaviour support plan will be put in place if deemed appropriate to meet the pupil's needs. The Inclusion Manager will arrange this.

Other forms of acceptable physical contact

There are other occasions when physical contact between staff and pupils may be appropriate. These include:

- PE activities or other lessons where pupils are practising physical skills and where physical prompting is employed as part of a teaching strategy. This should not involve any contact with sexual areas.
- Times, particularly with younger children when a member of staff may be leading the first child in the line by the hand, when physical contact is natural and appropriate.
- Administration of first aid or welfare will require physical contact as determined by the child's needs at the time.
- In some cases, a distressed pupil may need to be comforted. In any such case staff should be alert to the implications of the following:
 - Any history of physical or sexual abuse
 - Cultural factors
 - The age and gender of the pupil

Such forms of acceptable physical contact should take place within view of other staff.

Self defence

Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 covers the special powers of school staff to intervene physically for the good of the children but does not cover all situations when it might be reasonable for someone to use force. Everyone has the right to defend themselves against physical attack provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force to do so,

Recording Incidents

It is important that there is a detailed, contemporaneous, written report of any occasion where force is used. It may help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident, and it will be helpful should there be a complaint. The school will keep an up-to-date record of all such incidents. Immediately following any such incident the member of staff concerned should tell the Head or a senior member of staff and provide a written report as soon as possible afterwards. That should include:

- the name(s) of the pupil(s) and staff involved, and when and where the incident took place;
- the names of any other staff or pupils who witnessed the incident;

- the reason that force was necessary (e.g. to prevent injury to the pupil, another pupil or member of staff);
- how the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied, and for how long;
- the pupil's response, and the outcome of the incident;
- details of any injury suffered by the pupil, another pupil, or a member of staff and of any damage to property.

Parents will be promptly informed of any physical intervention involving their child.

Senior member of staff responsible: Nadine Carroll (Head teacher)

Designated member of staff: Natalie Menagh (Inclusion Manager)

(This policy will be reviewed in October 2013)

Appendix 1



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Description of force used *(give details of the degree of force used, how that was applied, and for how long)*

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Pupil's response to use of force:

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Any injuries sustained by the pupil:

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Parents informed via: face-to-face letter Phone call

Parent's views:

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Further action:.....

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Report compiled by: Signed:

Role:.....

Date:

Note: There is no legal requirement to share this complete report with parents. If the decision is taken to do so, all names of staff and other pupils must be removed first.

