



Dringhouses Primary School

Physical Intervention & Restraint Policy

Signature of Chair of Governors

Signature of Headteacher

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Reviewing Committee: Resources Committee

Statutory/Non-Statutory

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND RESTRAINT POLICY

Introduction

At Dringhouses Primary School we aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort in a minority of situations. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and this policy should therefore be read alongside our Positive Behaviour Policy.

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 have a 'duty of care' to all children they are in charge of. They must, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure all pupils' safety and wellbeing.

Staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

This policy is designed to explain the school's expectations for care and control and is based on the following principles:

- Physical intervention using reasonable force should be used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed.
- Any physical contact should be only the minimum required.
- Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- Incidents must be recorded and reported to the headteacher as soon as possible.
- Parents will be informed of incidents involving their child.

What Is Reasonable Force?

- The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
- Force is usually used to either 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 pupil needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- '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.
- '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.

- School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

The Legal Framework

Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 allows teachers and other persons who have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Causing injury to his/herself or others.
- Committing an offence.
- Damaging property.
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order & discipline.

Who can use reasonable force?

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. It can also apply to people temporarily in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit. 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.

Use of physical restraint

Physical restraint 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 punishment.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used:

Staff can use reasonable force to:

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so.
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit.
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others.
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground.
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming him/herself through physical outbursts.

Use of Team-Teach Techniques

Staff should apply the training they received in Team-Teach to de-escalate where possible, then use the appropriate holds as practised in the training. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below. In all circumstances, alternative methods should be used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint, a last resort.

DO

- 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 restraint (this may need frequent repetition).
- Use simple and clear language.
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow.
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance.

DON'T

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control).
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil.
- Involve other pupils in the restraint.
- Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct.
- 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.
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil.
- Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment.

Actions after an incident

Physical restraint often occurs in response to highly charged, emotional, situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. The headteacher should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern, it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of strategies agreed with the SENCo. This may require additional support from other services, such as the local authority's behaviour support team. It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.

All incidents will be recorded immediately on a Physical Intervention/Restraint Form so that any patterns of behaviour can be identified and addressed. In the event of any future complaint or allegation, this record will provide essential and accurate information. A copy will be filed in the child's central school file (and safeguarding file if appropriate). A record of the incident will then be entered onto CPOMS - a log of incidents involving physical intervention or restraint.

A member of the leadership team will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

Prevention Strategies

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention.
- Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known.
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take.
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance).
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate.
- The school's duty of care to all pupils and staff.

OTHER PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact with a pupil, other than reasonable force, is proper and necessary.

Comforting a Distressed Child

Children who ask or need to be cuddled or comforted will not be pushed away, however, such levels of contact should be avoided so that the safety of the child or the integrity of the adult is not compromised and so that a safe culture, with clear boundaries of expected behaviour, is evident at all times.

- You may use a comforting arm, if appropriate, for the individual child.
- You may use a guiding hand, where appropriate.
- Additional physical contact may be required for some early years' children and older pupils who need greater comfort or positive handling. The class teacher or SENCo should liaise with the parents to ascertain the appropriate types of comforting and physical contact that a child needs, e.g. a comforting arm around the shoulder whilst sitting next to the child. These children will be identified by the class teacher or SENCo and communicated to all staff, including visiting and peripatetic teachers.
- Before any physical contact is given, you should first consider whether it is age/gender appropriate.

- There may be some children for whom physical contact is particularly unwelcome. These children should be identified by the class teacher or SENCo and communicated to all staff, including visiting and peripatetic teachers.
- Early years' children or children with SEN may need you to provide physical prompts or help.

PE Lessons

Sometimes it is necessary to help children physically in school, e.g. helping a small child to fasten a trouser button or changing for PE. Where a child cannot perform a task independently, you should verbalise reasons for actions that could otherwise be misinterpreted or misconstrued, and ensure another adult or child is nearby. KS2 children do not require help with changing for PE but do require supervision from a distance to maintain order. Girls and boys who wish to change separately should be allowed to do so.

Some physical contact may be necessary to demonstrate exercise or techniques during PE lessons and sport coaching.

First Aid

From time to time children will need medical attention, and the following guidelines should be followed:

- If a child is on the ground and cannot get up by themselves, send for another adult, preferably a first-aider.
- When appropriate, allow the child to clean their own injury, e.g. KS2 pupils.
- If the injury is on or close to a child's torso, ask the child to check themselves to ascertain the extent of the injury. If this is not possible, and privacy is required to protect the child's modesty, use the medical room to check the injury, ensuring that another adult is present.

Intimate Care

When a child needs intimate care that is not already part of a health care plan, two adults should always be involved wherever possible. Depending on the age and maturity of the child, he/she should be encouraged to care for him/herself, with guidance or support from an adult.

Should the child be unable to clean him/herself appropriately, the parents must be contacted and asked to come to school and assist their child. It may be appropriate for the child to leave school to be made comfortable.

References

Use of Reasonable Force in Schools - Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies: DfE July 2013

Team Teach: <http://www.teamteach.co.uk/>

Behaviour principles

In light of the need for children to behave differently when they return to school, and any new systems you have put in place to support that, you'll need to make changes to your behaviour policy. Behaviour policy changes will also need to be communicated to pupils, parents and staff.

Areas schools may wish to add to their behaviour policy are:

- following any altered routines for arrival or departure
- following school instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing and sanitising
- following instructions on who pupils can socialise with at school
- moving around the school as per specific instructions (for example, one-way systems, out of bounds areas, queuing)
- expectations about sneezing, coughing, tissues and disposal ('catch it, bin it, kill it') and avoiding touching your mouth, nose and eyes with hands
- tell an adult if you are experiencing symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- rules about sharing any equipment or other items including drinking bottles
- amended expectations about breaks or play times, including where children may or may not play
- use of toilets
- clear rules about coughing or spitting at or towards any other person
- clear rules for pupils at home about conduct in relation to remote education
- rewards and sanction system where appropriate
- Identify any reasonable adjustments that need to be made for students with more challenging behaviour.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools#annex-a-behaviour-principles>