

OAKWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Physical Intervention and Reasonable Restraint Policy

Review Date	Autumn 2017
Reviewed by	FGB
Review Cycle	1 year
Next review due	Autumn 2018

Signed :.....

Name :.....
on behalf of the Governing Body of Oakwood Junior School

Physical Intervention and Reasonable Restraint Policy

Introduction and Legal Context

At Oakwood Junior School we are committed to a positive behaviour policy which encourages children to make positive behaviour choices. On rare occasions, circumstances may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention and reasonable restraint by school staff.

Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 allows teachers and other persons who are authorised by the headteacher who have control or charge of children to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a children 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

The Department for Education provided additional guidance and advice in the document 'Use of Reasonable Force' in July 2013 which is reflected in this policy.

Oakwood Junior School acknowledge we have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs (SEND). All children requiring relevant adjustments will have a regularly reviewed SEND target Plan which clearly outlines any potential physical intervention.

Aims of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to provide information and clarification for staff, parents/carers and the governing body regarding the use of reasonable restraint and physical intervention and the responsibilities of the headteacher, school staff and the governing body in respect of this.

Reasonable Force

There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force'. It will always depend on all the circumstances of the case/incident. There are two relevant considerations:

1. The use of force can only be regarded as reasonable if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it.
2. The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent.

Any force used should always be the minimum required to achieve the desired result. This includes the use of passive physical contact, such as standing between children or blocking a children's path, or active physical contact such as leading a child by the arm out of a classroom.

Whether it is reasonable to use force, and the degree of force that could reasonably be employed, might also depend on the age and level of understanding of the child.

Authorised Staff

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the headteacher has temporarily put in charge of children such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

Physical Intervention and Reasonable Restraint 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** children's 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.

Staff Training

Teaching Assistants (full list kept by the School Business Manager) have received training in "De-escalation and Positive Handling" by The Institute of Conflict Management which is valid for a two year period (due 26/06/2019.)

New staff are involved in an induction programme that makes them aware of school policies and procedures and expectations.

Use of Reasonable Restraint

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

Types of Incident:

There are a wide variety of situations where reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a child:

- Where action is necessary in self-defence.
- Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property.
- Where a child is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Examples of situations in the first two of the above categories include:

- A child attacks a member of staff, or another child.
- Children are fighting.
- A child is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property.
- A child is causing, or is at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects.
- A child absconds from a class or tries to leave school

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- A child persistently refuses to obey an order/request to leave a classroom.
- A child is behaving in a way that is disrupting a lesson and the learning of others.

Application of Force:

Where the risk is not urgent the member of staff should consider carefully whether, and if so when, physical intervention is appropriate. Staff should always try to deal with a situation through other strategies before using reasonable restraint.

Physical Intervention and Reasonable Restraint Policy

All school staff need a range of behaviour management strategies which can effectively diffuse and calm difficult children and situations. In a non-urgent situation, physical intervention should only be used when other methods have failed. This consideration is particularly appropriate in situations where the aim is to maintain good order and discipline, and there is no direct risk to people or property.

Before intervening physically, the member staff should, wherever practicable, tell the child who is misbehaving to stop and what will happen if he or she does not. They should continue attempting to communicate with the child throughout the incident and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and the member of staff should not give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish the child.

Physical intervention can take several forms:

- Physically interposing/getting between children
- Blocking a child's path
- Holding
- Pushing/directing
- Leading – child by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a child away by placing a hand in the centre of their back or on their shoulder
- (In extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of 'reasonable force', for example to prevent a young child running off a pavement into a busy road, or to prevent a child hitting someone, or throwing something.

Staff should always avoid touching or holding a child in a way that might be considered inappropriate.

If a decision is taken to use physical intervention it is often advantageous to have another responsible adult in attendance. They can support, observe and help call for assistance. Such a person can also make a witness statement for the record.

On some occasions teachers/staff will be required to make very quick judgement calls and may have to act without the presence of another colleague/responsible adult.

Sometimes a teacher should not intervene in an incident without help (unless it is an emergency). For example, when dealing with an older child or physically large child, or more than one child, or if the teacher/member of staff believes they may be at risk of injury. In these circumstances the teacher should remove other children who might be at risk, and then summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues, or where necessary phone the police. The teacher should inform the children that they have sent for help. Until assistance arrives the member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

Physical Intervention and Reasonable Restraint Policy

Actions Following an Incident

Physical intervention 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 child.

- The headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team 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 child involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.
- All incidents should be recorded immediately on the Headlines Report (Appendix A) (attached). All sections of this report should be completed 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.
- Where appropriate Abuse, Agression and Violence Incident Report form and Report of an Injury or Dangerous Occurrence form should be completed.
- A copy should be filed in the child's appropriate file and in a central school file in order to inform individual and school risk assessments.
- 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.
- If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a Behaviour Target Plan, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the Head. This may require additional support from other services, for example the Local Authority Behaviour Support Team.

Risk Assessments

If it becomes apparent that a child is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, the school 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 children and staff

Physical Contact with Children in Other Circumstances:

There are occasions when physical contact with a child may be proper or necessary. Some physical contact may be necessary to demonstrate exercises or technique during PE lessons, Sports

Physical Intervention and Reasonable Restraint Policy

Coaching, Design Technology, or if a member of staff has to give first aid and therapy for disabled children.

Children with special education needs may need staff to provide physical prompts or help. Touching may also be appropriate where a child, particularly a younger child is in distress or needs comforting. Staff will use their own professional judgement when they feel a child needs this kind of support.

Complaints

A clear physical intervention and reasonable restraint policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under the complaints disciplinary or allegation management procedures.

Review of the Policy

The school considers the physical intervention and reasonable restraint policy document to be important and, in conjunction with the governing body, updates the policy on a yearly basis.

Physical Intervention and Reasonable Restraint Policy

Headlines Report (Appendix A)

Use of Force to Control or Restrain Children: Incident Record

Details of child or children on whom force was used by a member of staff (name, class)

Date, time and location of incident

Names of staff involved (directly or as witnesses)

Details of other children involved (directly or as witnesses), including whether any of the children involved were vulnerable for SEN, disability, medical or social reasons

Description of incident by the staff involved, including any attempts to de-escalate and warnings given that force might be used

Reason for using force and description of force used

Any injury suffered by staff or children and any first aid and/or medical attention required

Reasons for making a record of the incident

Follow up, including post-incident support and any disciplinary action against children
Any information about the incident shared with staff not involved in it and external Agencies

When and how those with parental responsibility were informed about the incident and any views they have expressed

Has any complaint been lodged (details should not be recorded here)?

Report compiled by:
Name and role:
Signature:
Date:

Report Countersigned by:
Name and role:
Signature:
Date:

Oakwood Junior School

Communication of Behaviour Management Plan & School Risk Management Plan		
Plans and Strategies shared with:	Communication Method	Date Actioned

Staff Training Issues		
Identified training needs	Training provided to meet needs	Date training completed
De-escalation and Positive Handling	Teaching Assistants	26/06/2017 (valid for two years)

Physical Intervention and Reasonable Restraint Policy