



Sutton-on-Trent Primary and Nursery School

Use of Physical Force and Intervention Policy

Compiled by	Mrs J Hutchinson
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Recommended review period	Every 2 years
Date for review	September 2028

Use of Physical Intervention Policy

Context

Sutton-on-Trent Primary and Nursery School is committed to ensuring that all our pupils and staff are able to live and work in a supportive and caring environment, demonstrating a mutual respect, so that teaching and learning can take place in order to maximize potential and achievement.

In the rare circumstances that it becomes appropriate to use physical intervention, it will be used as a last resort and an act of care, not punishment and staff will follow the guidelines outlined below.

Staff are required while taking any of the action detailed in this policy to ensure that the pupil understands that this is a last resort and the security of the pupil is continually maintained.

All Incidents should immediately be reported to the Head Teacher and recorded on CPOMS

Circumstances when Physical Intervention may be necessary

- Where action is necessary in self-defense or because there is an imminent risk of injury to persons for example where a pupil attacks another pupil or a member of staff
- Where a pupil absconds from class or tries to leave the school, in circumstances where that pupil could be at risk if not kept in a classroom or school
- To move a child in the above situations, but only when all other practicable strategies have been tried

Staff will need to rely on their professional judgement about whether to physically intervene and place themselves in a hazardous situation or stand back and allow a pupils or colleague to face a potential hazard. Staff must balance the level and duration of their intervention against the seriousness and likely consequences of the incident.

What Staff will do before and During any Physical Intervention

Before physically intervening, staff will:

- remain calm
- tell the pupil to stop and explain to them what will happen if they do not
- use a range of non-physical interventions aimed at calming or defusing situations in order to prevent further escalation

These might include:

- continuing to speak and listen to the pupil(s)
- employing an appropriate level of eye contact during any dialogue
- diverting, distracting, cajoling or humouring, where appropriate
- reasoning with and offering appropriate choices to the pupil(s)

It is recommended that a teacher should not intervene in an incident without help although there may be situations where this is not possible.

Whilst physically intervening, staff will:

- use the minimum amount of force for the shortest possible time required to achieve the desired outcome
- tell the pupils that physical restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary

- continue to use a range of non-physical interventions aimed at calming or defusing situations in order to prevent further escalation, as above

Ways in which Staff may use Reasonable Force

Whilst there is no legal definition of reasonable force, DfES Circular 10/98 advises that "*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*".

A potentially dangerous situation may involve staff in:

- physically interposing between pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- leading or moving a pupil by the hand or arm
- shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- holding a pupil
- restraining (in extreme circumstances only)

Staff are not permitted to act in a way that might cause injury, for example, by:

- holding a pupil round the neck, by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupils ability to breathe
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- holding or pulling a pupil by any part of the body that will cause pain or injury.
- holding a pupil face down to the ground

The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Physical force cannot be justified in a situation that could clearly be resolved without force.

Staff who are Permitted to use Reasonable Force to Control or Restrain Pupils

Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 permits adults who have lawful charge or control of pupils to use reasonable force to control or restrain them. These include:

- teachers
- teaching assistants
- midday supervisors

Training

Our school will ensure that a copy of this policy will be given to all staff and fully explained to them. It is our policy that temporary or supply staff would refer to a senior member of staff before any physical intervention.

Appropriate training will be made available to all school-based staff, in line with the local authority's policy and guidelines.

Planning for the Needs of Individual Pupils

Our school aims to identify, in consultation with parents/carers, any pupils whose behaviour is considered potentially to require a physical or restraining intervention or response and to consider the needs of those pupils in relation to:

- any individual medical, social, behavioural, learning or cultural factors
- any Individual Education Plans which support the pupils

If a member of staff considers that a particular pupil may at some time need such intervention, the circumstances and needs will be discussed, usually at an SEN review.
A risk assessment will be completed for the pupil and additional training may be sought for specific staff.

Other Physical Contact with Pupils

Some physical contact may be necessary or unavoidable when staff are working with:

- pupils requiring First Aid or intimate care
- pupils receiving coaching in sport or as part of another curriculum activity
- pupils in distress

Our staff will make professional and sensitive judgements about the nature and extent of their physical contact with pupils. We will have particular regard for cultural sensitivities and gender differences, for the needs of adolescent pupils and of those who may be particularly vulnerable following previous trauma or abuse.

Record Keeping

Our school keeps a record of all incidents where physical intervention has been necessary on CPOMS. The Head Teacher or nominated senior member of staff will be informed at the earliest possible time after an incident. This person will also decide how and when to report the incident to the parent/carer; this should not be left beyond the end of the day of the incident. The written record will be completed within one working day and discussed with the nominated person. If the incident included a physical or verbal assault on a teacher/adult or another pupils, the LA's accident/incident form should be completed. The teacher/adult involved may seek guidance from a senior colleague and/or their Trade Union representative before filling in their report.

We will discuss the incident with any pupils or staff who were present and, where appropriate, collect a written account from them. In line with our commitment to working with parents, we aim to maintain an open dialogue for the duration of any relevant process which may follow an incident. We will review regularly the number and type of incidents in which force has been deemed necessary. This will be used to plan appropriate development to reduce the number of future incidents.

Complaints

Complaints following a dispute about the use of force by an adult should, in the first instance, be referred to the Head Teacher or the school's nominated person. This will generally result in an investigation, which will take account of the written or verbal reports which have been collected. Where disputes cannot be resolved informally within school, complaints should be pursued in accordance with the school's complaints procedures.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that all staff are familiar with the Local Authority's guidelines and the school policy.
2. Ensuring that all relevant staff have received training in non-physical interventions in order to reduce the need for physical restraint.
3. Ensuring that named personnel have received training in physical intervention techniques.
4. Monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the school's policy

Data will be processed to be in line with our requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation, Data Protection Act as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.